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Transcendence

2012年11月24日発売（毎月1回24日発売）
第38巻第1号

Monthly LaLa

毎月24日発売

JAN. 1 2003

特別定価450円

●表紙イラスト
あきづき空太

応募者全員サービス
この号だけで応募OK!

ニャンコ先生
ラグ&スリッパ
「夏目友人帳」by緑川ゆき
●読者資格1950円

「赤髪」初カレンダー付属だぞ
2013「赤目」10周年

Happy2013初づくし!!
新星★LaLa伝説開幕!!

初本誌集中連載スタート
敵は王サマ
石原ケイコ カラー40P

本誌初登場!!カラーつき読切
BEAR BEAR
池ジュン子
初HC①巻12/5発売

メガヒットあの方に愛の告白
夏目友人帳
緑川ゆき

ヒノコ
ヴァンパイア騎士 カラー
蒼穹樹祭のアリア
学園ベビーシッターズ
会長はメイド様!
狼陛下の花嫁
おいらんガール クライマックスカラー40P
ラストゲーム
蜂姑教室

伝説のチャク復活!!
4ジゲン
にざかな

オールスター直筆
年賀状プレゼント

*応募しめきりは12/10

初巻頭カラー40P集中連載スタート!
三日月とオレンジ
ふじつか雪
星夜のスクールロマンス

ふろく
「赤髪」初カレンダー!!
クラリネス王国
カレンダー2013
byあきづき空太

あきづき空太

赤髪の白雪姫

大ブレイク♥
運命切りひらくロマンス

A STORY OF THE AYAKASHI'S STRANGE CONTRACT
NEVER CONCLUDE, PART ONE

夏目友人帳 (なつめゆうじんちょう)

THE PEOPLE WHO ENTER THE WORLD OF "BEING ABLE TO SEE".

緑川ゆき (みどりかわ)

THERE ARE ALSO VERY CRUEL SPELLS THAT EXIST...

Opens

"EXORCISTS HAVE LAWS TOO.

ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST YOU IF YOU USED ILLEGAL SPELLS."

"FOR EXAMPLE, WHEN AN EXORCIST MAKES A CONTRACT OF MASTER AND SERVANT WITH AN AYAKASHI, THEY ARE TO NEVER BIND THE AYAKASHI BY THEIR REAL NAME."

EVER SINCE I WAS YOUNG, I'VE BEEN ABLE TO SEE STRANGE THINGS,

THINGS THAT OTHERS COULDN'T SEE... THEY'RE PROBABLY WHAT PEOPLE CALL YOUKAI.

Transcendence is recruiting!

Looking for:

- Translators (Japanese, Chinese, Korean)
- Proofreaders
- Editors (Cleaners and Typesetters)
- Quality Checkers

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AH! WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

NYANKO-SENSEI, YOU'RE REALLY HEAVY.

ROLLS OFF

THUMP

YOU'RE WAY TOO WORKED UP BY WHAT THAT EXORCIST SAID.

CRUSHES

.....

!

YOU TALK TOO MUCH, SENSEI.

THE BOOK THAT GRANDMOTHER LEFT BEHIND...

...HAS BEEN DEEMED CRUEL AND FORBIDDEN.

I'M LEAVING!

AHHH, REALLY!

IT'S NO WONDER I FEEL UNEASY ABOUT IT.

Argh...

NISHIMURA,

WHY ARE YOU CARRYING SO MANY THINGS? LET ME HELP YOU.

NATSUME! AH— IT'S REALLY HEAVY THOUGH!

HAHA, PUT YOUR BACK INTO IT! EAT MORE MEAT, NATSUME!

I'LL MANAGE.

HEAVES

WHOA! IT IS REALLY HEAVY! SAVE ME, NISHIMURA!

GEOSCIENCE ROOM

HAHA, THANKS A LOT!

plop

WE'RE HAVING SECOND PERIOD IN HERE. LET'S GO GET SOME TEXT-BOOKS.

SURE.

SEA MATE ONE

SCRIBBLES? ON THE BOARD?

HUH...

WHAT?

HEY NISHI-MURA,

DON'T YOU THINK IT'D BE BETTER TO ERASE THE SCRIBBLES ON THE BOARD?

SEA PLATE[illegible]OUNTAINS

LANDSCAP[illegible]

THIS MEANS IT WAS PROBABLY DONE BY AN AYAKASHI...

NOBODY ELSE CAN SEE IT.

I CAN'T EVEN READ IT ANY-MORE...

THE EXAM WILL COVER THIS...

IF SENSEI'S NOTES GET IN THE WAY, THAT'D BE BAD.

EOSCIENCE ROOM

RIGHT, I'LL GO NOW.

...

TAP

THERE SHOULDN'T BE A PROBLEM IF I JUST ERASE THOSE SCRIBBLES.

Later!

I'm going to remedial classes now. See you!

SORRY TO INTER-RUPT...

BA

M

HA

RUSTLE...

RUSTLE...

Hm

NO...

WAS I WRONG?

Silence...

close

THERE'S DEFINITELY AN AYAKASHI IN HERE.

IT'S BETTER IF I DON'T GET TOO CLOSE...

NATSUME-KUN?

JUMPS

WHAT HAPPENED? YOUR FACE IS PALE.

TAK!!

!

I GUESS AYAKASHI SHOW UP IN SCHOOL TOO...

BEING ABLE TO SEE THINGS OTHERS CAN'T...IT'S BEEN HARD ON YOU.

...AND THAT'S WHAT HAPPENED.

YOU SHOULDN'T GET TOO CLOSE TO THAT CLASS-ROOM, TAKI.

I UNDER-STAND.

BY THE WAY, TAKI...

ACTUALLY, THE TRUTH IS, AN AYAKASHI APPEARED AT MY HOUSE RECENTLY.

AH.

WHAT? AN AYAKASHI?! APPEARED?!

IT CAME IN BY ACCIDENT I'VE ALREADY SENT IT AWAY, BUT.

HOLD ON. YOU CAN'T SEE AYAKASHI! CAN YOU?

NO

ABOUT A WEEK AGO, I [redacted] SOMETHING STRANGE IN THE HOUSE

IT SOUNDED LIKE SOMETHING WAS RUNNING AROUND AND THEN FELL DOWN.

AFTER THAT, I STARTED HEARING IT IN MY DREAMS.

[redacted]

THE SOUND WASN'T VERY CLEAR,

BUT IT [redacted] SOMEONE

WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR? WHO ARE YOU CALLING TO?

IS SOMEONE THERE?

SO I TRIED TO USE MY GRAND-FATHER'S CIRCLE

I DIDN'T WANT TO DO ANYTHING STUPID,

BUT I WAS WORRIED THAT AN AYAKASHI MIGHT BE IN TROUBLE BECAUSE OF MY GRAND-FATHER..

SHUFFLE

Ho

SHUFFLE

SHUFFLE

AND THEN

IF YOU CAN HEAR ME, PLEASE HELP

RELAX.

RELAX

TREMBLES

B-B-BIG

YOUNG LADY,

CAN YOU SEE ME..?

...

I WAS HEADING TOWARDS MY DESTINATION, BUT I TOOK A SHORTCUT AND ENDED UP HERE

MY APOLOGIES, HUMAN CHILD. I DIDN'T MEAN TO FRIGHTEN YOU!

I'M SO SORRY COULD YOU HELP ME?"

HOWEVER THIS PLACE HAD SEALS AND SPELLS PLACED AROUND IT JUST WANTED TO PASS THROUGH THE HOUSE BUT COULDN'T GET OUT

AFTER THAT, I CHECKED THROUGH MY GRANDFATHER'S BOOKS FOR INFORMATION ON SEALS AND SPELLS.

IF YOU FOLLOW THESE DIRECTIONS YOU'LL BE ABLE TO GET OUT!

IT'D BE GREAT IF YOU COULD GET OUT SUCCESSFULLY..

IF I MANAGE TO GET OUT, AS EVIDENCE,

YES.

OH, OH THANK YOU VERY MUCH I SHALL TRY IT IMMEDIATELY

I'LL LEAVE A FLOWER AT YOUR DOOR TO LET YOU KNOW.

HEHE I'M GLAD!

I NEVER THOUGHT THAT I COULD USE THAT CIRCLE TO HELP SOMEONE

IT'S GREAT!

YES. .

AHHH TAK!

IS SO TRUSTING

THAT'S TRUE

INTERACTIONS WITH YOUKAI AREN'T ALWAYS FRIGHTENING.

Transcendence

NYANKO-SENSEI!

AHI

RUSTLE

OH! SO YOU'RE HERE!

BUT

HEY NATSUME I WANT TO EAT THIS BUT I CAN'T OPEN THE CAN.

SNUGG

HM?

AH

HEY YOU! DON'T COME TO SCHOOL FOR SUCH TRIVIAL THINGS AGAIN, OK? SENSEI!

SQUEEZES

FLUFFY FUR-SENSEI!

CRACK

CRACK

CRACK

IT'S A BIT FAINT BUT I CAN SMELL AYAKASHI ON YOU.

WHAT?

HM?

TAKI, WHAT HAVE YOU BEEN UP TO?

RUSTLE

SENSEI?

I SEE

A FEW DAYS AGO

WHEN WAS THAT?

SHE SAID THAT SHE SENT AN AYAKASHI THAT ACCIDENTALLY ENTERED HER HOUSE AWAY

ACCORDING TO WHAT SHE SAID, THE AYA-KASHI SHOULD HAVE LEFT DAYS AGO YET THE SMELL STILL LINGERS.

!

SENSEI. WHAT HAP-PENED WITH TAKI?

WHO KNOWS?

IT'S STILL AT TAKI'S HOUSE.

ARE YOU SAYING THAT IT HASN'T LEFT?!

"ACTION WOULD BE TAKEN AGAINST YOU IF YOU USED ILLEGAL SPELLS."

BESIDES

WHY DON'T YOU DROP BY TAKI'S HOUSE TO TAKE A LOOK TOMORROW AFTER SCHOOL?

WHAT?

THAT CIRCLE.

WE SHOULD TELL HER IT'S FORBIDDEN BY EXORCISTS TOO OTHERWISE, SOONER OR LATER, THERE'LL BE PROBLEMS

...A SPELL THAT MAKES PEOPLE, WHO SHOULD HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH AYAKASHI AT ALL,

SPELLS THAT ALLOW PEOPLE WHO CAN'T NORMALLY SEE AYAKASHI TO SEE THEM

AND EVEN MEET WITH TERRIBLE CREATURES.

ABLE TO ESTABLISH CONTACT WITH THEM,

BUT IT'S ALSO

COULD BE VERY DANGEROUS

TELLING HER ABOUT IT

SHE'D BE HAPPY THINKING IT'S A PRECIOUS GIFT FROM HER GRANDFATHER

HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO EXPLAIN EVERYTHING TO HER?

SOMETHING ELSE HAS BEEN BOTHERING ME

Ker-chak

ALSO,

THERE IS MORE

I'M LOST. TAKE ME AWAY.

IS .T THE AYAKASHI THAT WAS PASSING BY?

I'M LOST. TAKE ME AWAY.

Huh?

I'm lost

Take me away

TAKE ME AWAY

I'M LOST TAKE ME AWAY

unbelievable

unbelievable

unbelievable

HONESTLY! WHY DO I HAVE TO GO WITH YOU?

IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE MY BODYGUARD OR ANYTHING. THINK OF IT AS COMING WITH ME FOR A WALK

AND BESIDES,

I CAN SMELL RED-BEAN SOUP INSIDE!

SO, SENSEI, CAN YOU FEEL ANYTHING FROM THE HOUSE?

WHAT? THAT'S..

IDIOT! WHY DOES SOMEONE SUPERIOR LIKE ME..

WHAT A LAME REASON.

IT'S AWKWARD FOR A GUY TO VISIT A GIRL'S HOUSE BY HIMSELF

WHEN I WENT TO LOOK FOR TAKI AFTER CLASS, SHE'D ALREADY LEFT

OH. COMING!

CREAK

Ding dong-

NATSUME-KUN?! AH.

BUT I HAVE SOME-THING I NEED TO TALK TO YOU ABOUT

SORRY FOR COMING SO SUDDENLY, TAKI.

ERM.

WHO., WHO IS THIS? NATSUME-KUN, DO YOU KNOW HER?

" She's so pretty

SORT OF .. SORRY, I DIDN'T MEAN TO SCARE YOU

CAN'T YOU TELL, YOUNG LADY?

I'M NYANKO-SENSEI!

HUH? NYANKO. ?

...

? ? ?

HUH?!

IT WOULD LOOK BAD IF YOUR NEIGHBORS SAW A BOY ENTERING YOUR HOUSE BY HIMSELF

SO I CAME UP WITH THIS IDEA

PLUS, ONCE I LOOK LIKE THIS, YOU CAN'T HUG ME ANYMORE

AWW.. YOU'RE SO MEAN, SENSEI.

LOOKING AROUND

NATSUME-KUN. ?

.....

BUT., THANK YOU FOR COMING OVER.

SO, NATSUME-KUN, WHAT WERE YOU SAYING?

NATSUME-KUN?

AH, SORRY

WHERE'S YOUR FAMILY?

OH, MY FATHER AND BROTHER ARE BOTH WORKING OVERSEAS.

MY MOTHER ALWAYS COMES HOME REALLY LATE

SO,

I'VE ALWAYS BEEN CLOSE WITH MY GRANDFATHER.

I SEE

TAKI ABOUT YOUR GRAND-FATHER'S CIRCLE

HEY, TAKI. AS THANKS FOR THE SOUP, I'LL TELL YOU THIS

WHAT?

THERE ARE PEOPLE WHO CONSIDER YOUR GRAND-FATHER'S CIRCLE FORBIDDEN.

SENSE!!

IT'S ONLY THE EXORCISTS THAT THINK THAT WAY THOUGH.

BUT IF THEY KNEW THAT YOU HAD THIS CIRCLE AND WERE USING IT, COMPLICATIONS COULD ARISE.

IF YOU WANT TO LIVE

IT'S BETTER IF YOU DON'T USE IT OR EVEN MENTION IT TO ANYONE ELSE

BUT YOU MIGHT AS WELL THROW AWAY SOMETHING SO USELESS

DESTROYING IT NOW WOULD PREVENT FUTURE PROBLEMS

FORBIDDEN

GRAND-FATHER'S CIRCLE IS

SENSEI!

pitter

patter

!

BAM

TAK...

patter

patter

NATSUME-KUN?

Gosh

"ARE YOU SAYING THAT IT HASN'T LEFT?!"

"WHO KNOWS?"

SOME-H NG'S HERE

Patte

IT'S WEAK, BUT THERE'S A CERTA.N SME..L

TAKI, WHAT DID THAT AYAKASHI LOOK LIKE?

WELL...

IT WAS REALLY BIG AND HAIRY

ERM.

WHY DO YOU ASK?

COULD IT BE THE ONE AT SCHOOL?

THEN, THE BLACKBOARD...

I'M LOST... TAKE ME AWAY...

"I'M LOST..."

"TAKE ME... AWAY..."

HUH?

Comments from the staff:

Kirlane: Hi! I'm Kirlane and I like to eat chicken. Hope you enjoyed reading this chapter!

Soraliya: I really liked Taki's expression when she saw Nyanko-sensei in human form. Possible Taki x Natsume ship in the future?! Ehehehehe. >.)

Krissy: Hi there! nice to finally say hi after working on this project for who knows how long. Hope you all enjoy this chapter and remember to visit us on the forums once in a while *coughsowe-don'tgetlonelyenough*

Vauxhall: I strongly suggest that when you go to investigate strange noises, you take someone with you. Safety in numbers. *thumbs up*

forum.ourtranscendence.com

Come meet the rest of the staff on our forums!

I'LL LEAVE IT TO YOU.

THANK YOU NATSUME-KUN!

GULP

IT'S NOT CLEAR YET,

BUT WE'LL FIND A WAY TO CATCH IT FIRST, OK?

!

Patter

Patter

Patter

Pitter

OVER HERE NATSUME!

Pitter

Patter

Huh?

Patter

STEP

STEP

WATCH THIS!

SENSEI!

ROAR

ENOUGH SCUTTLING AROUND.

I'VE GOT YOU!

AH!

TRAP

I CAUGHT IT! NOW BUY ME A BUN ON OUR WAY HOME

THANK'S YOU DIDN'T CRUSH IT, DID YOU?

HUH?

WAIT WHAT?

IT'S SMALLER THAN I EXPECTED

IF IT'S REALLY WHAT TAKI DESCRIBED

OR WHAT I SAW IN SCHOOL.

IT OUGHT TO BE BIGGER

NATSUME KUN.

Let go of me

Let go..

Credits

Translator: Kiriane

Proofreader: Sorairya

Cleaner: Krissy

Typesetter: Krissy

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Raw Provider: Ree_Rhea

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Monthly

夏目

2

特別定価450円

表紙イラスト
緑川ゆき

「夏目」10周年

サプライズ満載!!

ポストカード

ぴろく

新書W新作試し

ポーチプレゼント

この号だけで応募OK!!

カレンダー

ティーポット&
カップ

日本昔ばなし

ニャンコ先生

10周年イヤースタート！

メガヒットおやかし契約奇談

巻頭カラー

BIG40P

夏目友人帳

緑川ゆき

アニメ「夏目友人帳 肆」毎週火曜夜7時からアニマックスにて絶賛放送中！&
12月28～30日には「夏目友人帳」TVシリーズを一挙放送!!（第一期を除く）
TV初登場！緑川ゆき原作・映画「蛍火の杜へ」がTOKYO MXにて放送決定！
（2013年1月1日（火）20:00～20:50）
原作コミックス「愛蔵版 蛍火の杜へ」も
大好評発売中です!!

HC最新⑮巻＆夏目待望の初ノベライズ
小説・夏目友人帳（原作：緑川ゆき 著：香月日輪）
2013年1月4日（金）2冊同時発売！

夏目友人帳

なつめゆうじんちょう

第十五話

だいろくじゅうごわ

You bastard

I won't forgive you.

NATSUME-KUN?

ARGH!

SUPER BITE!

IF YOU DON'T LET GO OF ME RIGHT NOW

WRIGGLE

IT'S DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE THAT WAS AT SCHOOL

TAKI, STAND BACK A BIT

OH OK

SWIPE

SWIPE

SWIPE

Boing

Boing

NOT BAD, YOU STINKING RAT!

AHHH! STOP IT, SENSEI!

YEAH

WHO ARE YOU? WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

YOU'RE DIFFERENT FROM THAT GIRL. YOU CAN SEE ME?

HMM?

Boing

Boing

Natsume's Book of Friends

JUMPS

WAH!

IT'S NOT LIKE I WANT TO STAY HERE

HEY! MAYBE YOU COULD HELP ME

HEY, HEY! IT'S COMING OVER!

Tsk

I SAID.

STOP IT!

WAH!

THIS RAT-LIKE CREATURE OVER HERE?

SO THE AYAKASHI THAT NATSUME-KUN AND SENSE. SENSED WAS..

I STILL CAN'T SEE IT

AH, IT'S OVER HERE, TAK.

SO, WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE?

AS YOU CAN SEE, I AM A TRAVELING RABBIT

I EMBARKED ON AN EAT-AND-SLEEP JOURNEY WITH A FRIEND

WOW! I'M SO ENVIOUS.

WAIT WHAT?!

YOU'RE YOU'RE A RABBIT? BUT YOU'RE OBVIOUSLY A RAT

Lifts

IDIOT YOU CAN'T EVEN TELL THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN A RABBIT AND A RAT? JUST LOOK AT MY TAIL.

AWW, HOW CUTE

WHAT?!

HERE, LET ME DRAW IT FOR YOU.

IT LOOKS LIKE A RAT BUT THE TAIL IS LIKE THIS.

OHHH

HEY, LISTEN TO ME, HUMAN BOY!

WHEN MY FRIEND AND I WERE PASSING BY THIS AREA, WE SAW A BIG AND HAIRY AYAKASHI ENTER THE HOUSE

WE WERE SURROUNDED BY INVISIBLE WALLS AND ENDLESS CORRIDORS, AND WE GOT LOST MY FRIEND AND I WERE SEPARATED

BUT THEN WE WERE TRAPPED IN THIS CURSED HOUSE

WE WEREN'T FAMILIAR WITH THE AREA SO WE THOUGHT THERE WAS SOMETHING INTERESTING IN HERE AND FOLLOWED IT INSIDE

ACTUALLY, I'VE SEEN SOMETHING THAT LOOKS LIKE AN EXIT.

BUT I CAN'T LEAVE UNTIL I FIND MY FRIEND

THIS MEANS THAT BOTH THE HAIRY AYAKASHI AND THE RABBITS ENTERED THE HOUSE AND GOT LOST

YEAH.

THIS WAS PROBABLY THE AYAKASHI THAT TAKI HEARD CALLING FOR SOMEBODY IN HER DREAMS

WHAT DOES YOUR FRIEND LOOK LIKE?

HE'S A RABBIT LIKE ME.

NATSUME-KUN?

AHHH.

SO ONCE WE FIND YOUR RABBIT FRIEND, YOU CAN LEAVE?

.....

!

THE SMELL THAT LINGERED IN THE HOUSE AND ON YOU MUST HAVE BEEN THEIRS.

SO THAT'S IT EVEN THOUGH YOU SENT ONE AYAKASHI AWAY, THERE WERE STILL TWO LOST RABBITS HERE.

OF COURSE! WHO WANTS STAY BY A HUMAN'S SIDE?

BESIDES,

NATSUME-KUN, ARE YOU ALL RIGHT? DID THE AYAKASHI SAY SOME-THING. ?

ONLY THE WORST KIND OF HUMAN WOULD USE SPELLS LIKE THESE

COULD YOU HELP ME?

NATSUME-KUN, I CAN'T SEE THEM, AND I KNOW IT'S NOT GOOD TO USE THE CIRCLE, SO

I SEE

IT SAID IT'LL LEAVE ONCE IT FINDS ITS FRIEND

THANK YOU!

OF COURSE!

Taki, it's over there

CLENCH

...

PLEASE BEAR WITH ME

RABBIT-SAN, I'M SORRY THAT YOU GOT TRAPPED IN THIS STRANGE HOUSE I PROMISE I'LL HELP YOU FIND YOUR FRIEND

HM? AFTER IT ENTERED THAT GIRL'S STRANGE CIRCLE, IT FOUND AN EXIT AND LEFT THE HOUSE

I SEE

Say.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT HAPPENED TO THE HAIRY AYAKASHI?

WHO WAS THE AYAKASHI AT SCHOOL?

Ohh you really understand how things work

Sensei! you come help too! I'll reward you

BUT THEN

WE'VE GOT A ROUGH IDEA OF THE SITUATION

AND PEERS IN FROM THAT WINDOW

STILL, THAT GUY COMES BACK ONCE IN A WHILE.

WHAT?

OVER THERE FROM THAT WINDOW

ISN'T IT PRETTY?

AHHH, THAT'S THE FLOWER THE AYAKASHI LEFT FOR ME

A PLUM BLOSSOM? THEY'RE PRETTY RARE TO SEE AROUND THIS TIME OF YEAR.

YES

IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S ABOUT TO WILT

I THOUGHT IT'D LAST FOR A WHILE

BUT,

I DO FEEL A BIT LONELY

IT WASN'T EASY TO FINALLY GET A MEMENTO FOR MEETING AN AYAKASHI

TAK.! GET AWAY FROM THE WINDOW!

PULL

AH...

NATSUME-KUN.

TAK!, STAY IN HERE AND DON'T COME OUT!

DASH

OUT THERE,

..T'S DEFINITE..Y THAT GUY!

RUSTLE

Step
Step
WHY ARE YOU LOITERING AROUND HERE AND AT SCHOOL?
YOU'RE THE AYAKASHI TAKI SENT AWAY, AREN'T YOU?

OR IS IT SOMETHING ELSE?

GRIPS

GRABS

!

HOLD ON! WHY ARE YOU ?!

WHAT MESSAGE ARE YOU TRYING TO SEND?!

YOU WERE THE ONE WHO WROTE THOSE WORDS ON THE BOARD, RIGHT?!

"LOST" AND "TAKE ME AWAY" THOSE WORDS.

WHAT DO THEY MEAN?

CHILD, YOU

CAN UNDER-STAND THOSE WORDS?

EVEN IF

YOU CAN UNDERSTAND THEM.

SECRET

HELP ME KEEP THEM A SECRET .

ESPECIALLY FROM THAT YOUNG LADY

HOW EMBAR-RASSING

HOW UTTERLY EMBAR-RASSING.

AHHH.

IF THEY COULD HEAR MY VOICE, WOULD ALL HUMANS BE LIKE THIS TOO?

HUH?

STRAIGHT IN THE EYE

AHHH.. YOU CAN ALSO LOOK ME

WHAT ?

I GUESS IT'S FATE,

THAT SOMEBODY WHO CAN HEAR ME WOULD APPEAR.

PLEASE HELP ME KEEP SECRET

. WHAT I AM ABOUT TO SAY

NO MATTER HOW LOUDLY I CRIED AND CURSED, NOBODY COULD HEAR ME

I USED TO LIVE FAR AWAY, IN AN ANCIENT TREE ON THE NORTHERN BORDER. BUT HUMANS CUT IT DOWN.

Huh?

NO WAY

I CAN'T MAKE ANY PROMISES YET

I HAVE BEGUN TO HATE HUMANS.

BUT

HOWEVER, THAT WAS TO BE EXPECTED

THE TRUTH OF THE WORLD IS THAT THIS VOICE CANNOT BE HEARD BY HUMANS

I WAS FRUSTRATED AND BEGAN TO PANIC.

ALONG THE WAY, I TOOK A SHORTCUT BUT BECAME TRAPPED IN THAT HOUSE

WITH THE HOPE THAT IT COULD BE MY NEW HOME, I STARTED MY JOURNEY TOWARDS IT

ON A MOUNTAIN IN THE SOUTH, THERE'S A TREE THAT RESEMBLES THE ONE I USED TO STAY IN.

SHE'S AN INCREDIBLE YOUNG LADY

USING A FASCINATING CIRCLE.

IS SOMEONE THERE?

SHE WAS OBVIOUSLY TREMBLING IN FEAR,

BUT WHEN I ASKED FOR HER HELP

I'VE EVER SEEN A HUMAN'S EYES.

IT WAS THE FIRST TIME

SHE LOOKED ME STRAIGHT IN THE EYE

AHHH
THAT IS.

HEY NATSUME,

HOW LONG ARE YOU GOING TO CHAT WITH THIS GUY?

HURRY UP AND FIND THE RABBIT SO WE CAN GO HOME

VERY.

SENSEI! HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN THERE ?

HM? WHAT'S THAT THING THAT LOOKS LIKE A FUR BALL?

WHAT?!

VERY

I'M GLAD I'VE FOUND A WAY OUT BUT IF I DON'T REPAY HER, I WON'T FEEL AT EASE.

I CAN HELP TOO

AHHH THAT'S RIGHT.

SO THAT MEANS THOSE TWO RAT-LIKE AYAKASHI DID FOLLOW IN BEHIND ME.

RABBIT?

SHE'S REALLY WORRIED AND WANTS TO FIND THEM.

THERE WERE TWO OF THEM THAT GOT LOST IN TAKI'S HOUSE

I'VE BEEN WONDERING WHAT I COULD DO FOR HER. THAT'S WHY I'VE BEEN SECRETLY WATCHING THAT YOUNG LADY HERE AND AT SCHOOL.

!

SHOULD I STILL STAY AWAY FROM THE WINDOW?

IS EVERY-THING OK?

NATSUME-KUN?

AH.

IT'S SAFE NOW, TAKI.

THANK GOODNESS NATSUME-KUN, ARE YOU OK?

YEAH, I'M FINE

OH, AND THERE'S—

COVERS!

IT'S TOO EMBARRASSING FOR A HUGE AYAKASHI LIKE ME TO BE PACING SHYLY AROUND A YOUNG LADY'S SIDE

Muffles

Muffles

SO YOU BETTER KEEP YOUR MOUTH SHUT SAY ANYTHING EXTRA AND I'LL BREAK YOUR NECK.

NATSUME-KUN?

Sigh

ALTHOUGH THE AREAS I CAN ACCESS ARE LIMITED, WITH THE MAP I GOT FROM THE YOUNG LADY, PERHAPS I CAN TRACK HIM THROUGH HIS SCENT

LET'S GET GOING

"IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER SEEN A HUMAN'S EYES "

"AH, THAT IS .."

NO

IS SOMETHING WRONG, NATSUME?

SEEMS TO

IT'S NOTHING.

I'M PROBABLY WRONG BUT

"VERY "

THAT AYAKA-SHI

There's nothing in the courtyard.

Do you remember where you were separated?

Hmm...

What is this made out of? Even I can't open it

Whoa!

Stumble

It's a storage box. Let me do it

Just up ahead

CLUNK CLUNK

How about here?

Clack

Over here?

HEY, HOLD ON.

HUGE...

That's enough - I'm so tired

Tak let's take a break.

THERE'S A BOX UNDERNEATH MY CUPBOARD.

Let me see if I can get it

Nrgh~~

MAYBE IT'S IN HERE!

TAK!! LET ME DO IT!

AH!

I GOT IT! I GOT IT, NATSUME-KUN, SENSEI!!

SO? IS RABBIT-SAN IN THERE?

FLIES UP

NEXT UP, THE SECOND FLOOR! LET'S GO!

Shock

AH

WHAT HAPPENED?

I GUESS NOT

AH.

NOTHING.

REALLY! IF YOU GET LOST AGA.N, I'M NOT GOING TO BOTHER

ERM TAKI. THE TRUTH IS. AH!

WHAT HAPPENED TO YOUR FINGER? IT'S BLEEDING

OH, IT'S NOTHING. I TRIED TO USE AN OLD KEY TO OPEN THE DOOR, BUT ENDED UP GETTING CUT ON IT

THAT'S NOT GOOD TAKI. CUTS FROM OLD THINGS CAN BE DANGEROUS

YOU SHOULD GO WASH IT

BUT

TH-THAT'S RIGHT!

I HEARD HUMANS ARE SURPRISINGLY WEAK.

YOU BETTER GO WASH YOUR CUT

IDIOT EVEN IF YOU SAY THAT SHE CAN'T HEAR YOU.

HUH?

RABBIT NUMBER ONE TOLD YOU TO WASH YOUR CUT

OH.

OK!

THANK YOU.

I'LL BE RIGHT BACK

IT SEEMS TAKI FEELS RESPONSIBLE FOR HER GRANDFATHER,

AND THE FORBIDDEN SPELL.

TAKI'S GRANDFATHER IS FORMIDABLE INDEED

OH, THAT WORKS TOO?

HMPH IT'S SO TROUBLE-SOME

AS LONG AS I FOLLOW A GUEST, MORE PLACES ARE ACCESSIBLE TO ME.

IT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE HERE AS A GUEST

COME TO THINK OF IT, SENSEI, AREN'T YOU AN AYAKASHI TOO? HOW CAN YOU MOVE AROUND SO FREELY IN HERE?

HM?

SPELLS HAVE A POSSIBILITY OF CHANGING YOUR ORIGINAL APPEARANCE, AND ALLOWING YOU TO REACH PLACES YOU NEVER COULD HAVE REACHED OTHERWISE

BUT I THINK.

. THE MAIN PRIORITY OF THE PERSON WHO USED THESE SPELLS WAS TO PROTECT

HEY, CHILD!

OVER HERE

POISON

Huh?

ON ONE HAND, IT'S LIKE AN ANTIDOTE

BUT ON THE OTHER, IT COULD ALSO BECOME A POISON

RUNS

AH

THE SECOND FLOOR?

HEY! THIS DEFINITELY WASN'T HERE BEFORE

OVER HERE, CHILD

THIS DOOR

Huff Huff

PUSH
PUSH
PUSH

THREE.
TWO.
ONE

IT WAS PROBABLY SOME SORT OF DISGUISING SPELL. ONCE YOU TOUCH THE WALL, IT APPEARS.

BUT IF WE WANT TO OPEN THE DOOR, WE NEED EVERYONE TO HELP

NRGHH

PUSH

IT'S OPEN!

CREAK

CREAK

CREAK

!

PUSH

ARGH.

PUSH
PUSH

!

FOUND HIM!

TAKI, WE FOUND HIM.

CLARK

SHOVES

HOW IS IT?

TAKEMI-TSU, ARE YOU IN HERE?!

TAKE-MITSU!

WAHHH, TAKEMITSU, I'M SO SORRY!

Embrace

WAHHH! AWAYUKI, I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE OK!

AND THE LADY OF THE HOUSE ALSO HELPED.

THESE PEOPLE HELPED ME FIND YOU.

I'M SO SORRY, TAKEMITSU.

I CAME IN WITHOUT THINKING

IT'S ALL MY FAULT. I WANTED TO SEE WHAT A HUMAN HOUSE LOOKED LIKE

I CAN'T PUT MY DEAR FRIEND IN DANGER AGAIN

I WON'T GO NEAR THEM EITHER.

I DON'T HATE HUMANS ANYMORE.

BUT

EVEN IF THAT YOUNG LADY COMES OVER, SHE CAN'T SEE US

WAIT, TAK ISN'T HERE YET

AH

GOOD I'LL TAKE THESE GUYS OUT OF HERE

Gently lifts

JUST THINK OF IT AS ENDING A DOOMED RELATIONSHIP

EVEN THOUGH SHE CAN'T SEE YOU, SHE CAN AT LEAST SAY GOODBYE

THAT'S OBVIOUSLY SOMETHING THAT CAN'T HAPPEN.

SOMETHING YOU CAN'T SEE IS AKIN TO SOMETHING THAT DOESN'T EXIST

TO YOU WHO CAN SEE US, THIS IS VERY CLEAR

THE PERSON WHO FORBADE IT IS RIGHT

ER.

THE FORBIDDEN THING YOU WERE TALKING ABOUT JUST NOW WAS THE CIRCLE, WASN'T IT?

THIS.

THE PERSON WHO DID THAT MUST HAVE BEEN A GENTLE PERSON

BECAUSE AFTER I ENTERED THAT CIRCLE AND SAW A HUMAN'S EYES FOR THE FIRST TIME

AFTER I SAW THAT YOUNG LADY'S EYES.

FOR SOME REASON, I FELT LIKE I DIDN'T WANT TO LEAVE THIS PLACE

BUT IF I STAY BEHIND,

I WOULD ONLY FEEL LONELIER

STEP

NATSUME-KUN?

STEP

STEP

STARTLED

I'M SO USELESS.

WHY IS IT SO PAINFUL ?

Float

TAK!

I'VE REPAID MY DEBT

I CAN LEAVE NOW

WAIT, AT LEAST LEAVE A MESSAGE.

ISN'T THERE ANYTHING YOU WANT TO SAY TO TAK!?

NO

BUT THERE IS SOMETHING YOU COULD DO FOR ME

I DIDN'T INTEND TO SEND ANY KIND OF MESSAGE, BUT I KEPT THINKING ABOUT SOMETHING OVER AND OVER AGAIN

SO I IMITATED HUMANS AND SCRIBBLED DOWN SOME WORDS.

KEEP IT A SECRET FOR ME

PLEASE, THEY WILL DISAPPEAR SOON BUT IF YOU HAPPEN TO UNDERSTAND THEM BEFORE THAT .

STEP STEP S.TEP

NATSUME-KUN.

SOON

AH...!

NATSU-ME-KUN.

THAT GUY'S STRONGER THAN I THOUGHT.

KEH, HE WAS JUST OVER-WHELMED BY THE AYAKASHI'S AURA.

NATSUME-KUN, ARE YOU OK?

NATSUME-KUN?!

AHHH, TAKI

ALTHOUGH IT'S QUIET, YOU CAN STILL HEAR

I M FINE

LISTEN CARE-FULLY

THEY'RE SAYING THANK YOU

AND GOODBYE

AND THAT AYAKASHI.

THE RABBITS

THEY REALLY WANT YOU TO HEAR IT

IN THE END,
I WAS THE ONLY
ONE WHO WAS
ABLE TO HEAR

AND THE AYAKASHI WHO CAME INTO MY CIRCLE HELPED AS WELL
THANKS, NATSUME

YUP

SO THE RABBITS DID MANAGE TO GET OUT SAFELY

THAT'S GREAT

YEAH,
I KNOW

IT'S STILL PRECIOUS TO ME

YOU KNOW, EVEN IF IT'S DANGEROUS,

pulls open

GEOSCIENCE ROOM

"IF IT COULD COME TRUE I WOULD LOVE TO BRING YOU TO PLAY

IN THAT BEAUTIFUL VALLEY."

THAT BEAUTIFUL VALLEY

THE. LOST ME. "

"YOU SAVED.

"I'M. LOST "

"WHAT DO HUMANS CALL IT AGAIN ?"

"THAT BEAUTIFUL VALLEY "

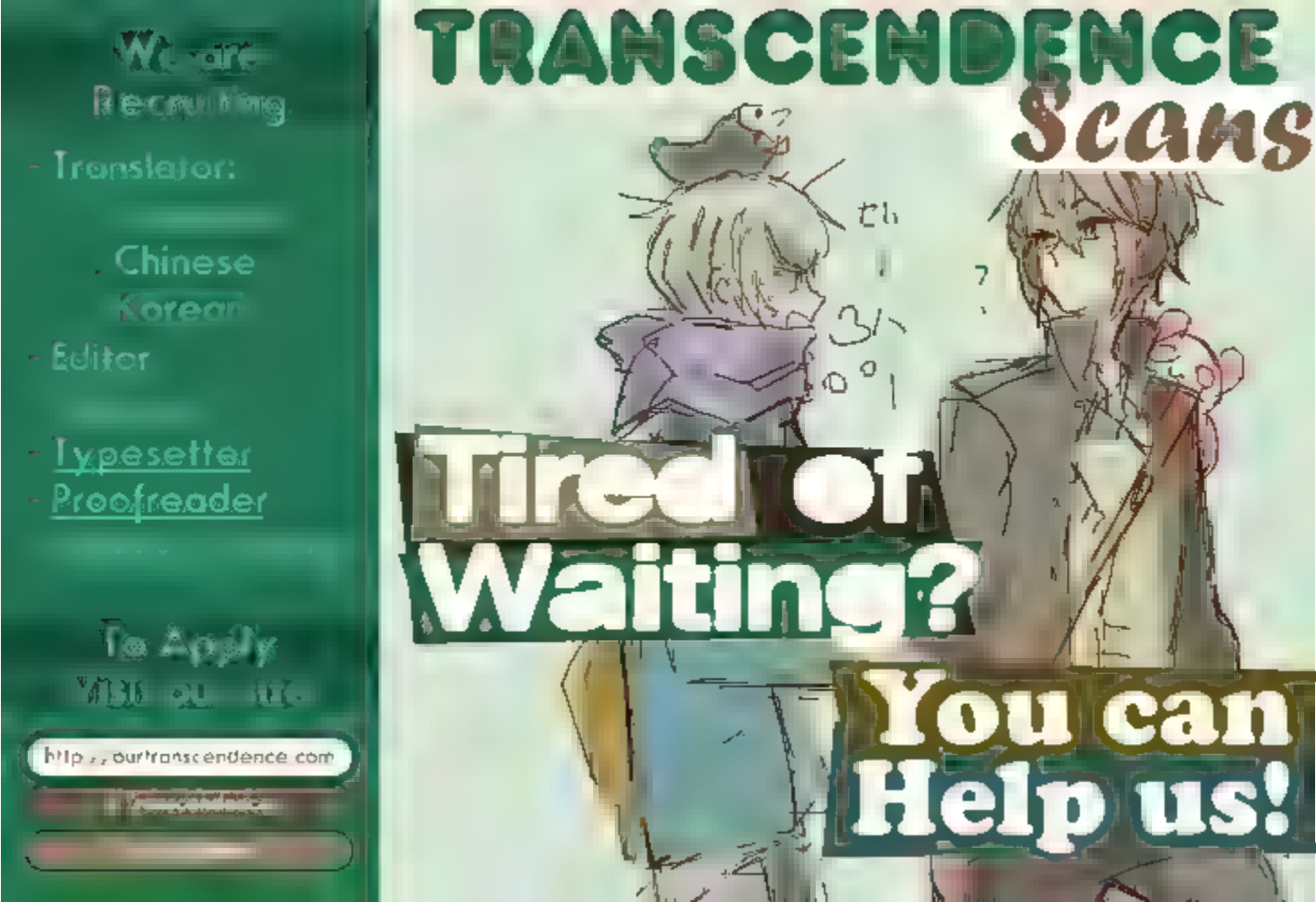
"THIS FEELING "

"I WISH I COULD SEE IT WITH YOU "

IT'S..

OBVIOUSLY...

"PLEASE KEEP IT A SECRET FOR ME "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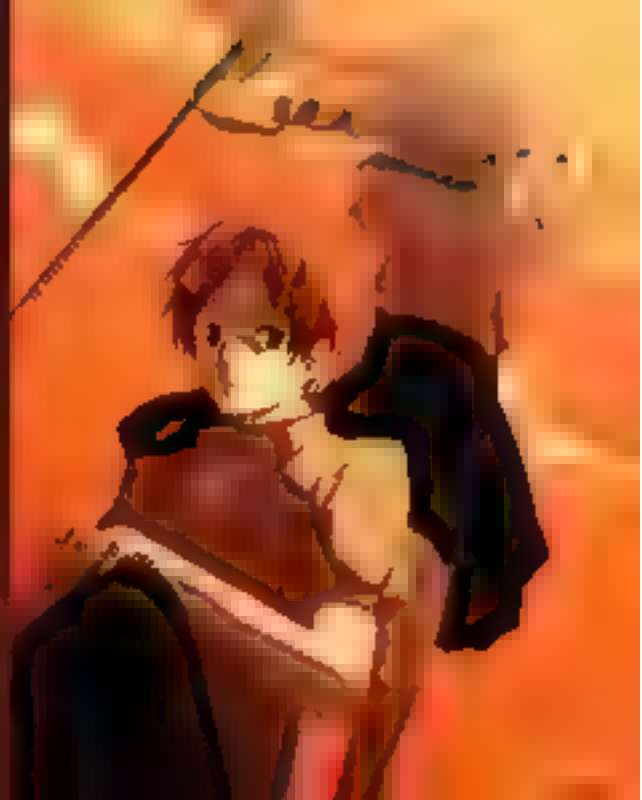


夏目友人帳

なつめゆうじんちょう

THE DISTANT FESTIVAL FIRE CHAPTER PART ONE

JOGGING WITH MY BODYGLARD ON A WINTER MORNING...

第十六話（だいじゅうろくわ）

THINGS THAT OTHER PEOPLE CAN'T SEE THEY'RE KNOWN AS YOUKAI

GOOD MORNING!

EVER SINCE I WAS YOUNG I'VE BEEN ABLE TO SEE STRANGE THINGS

Crackle

Crackle

Crackle

Crackle

Crackle

AH, TAKASHI-KUN. WELCOME

KANAME'S ON THE PHONE AT THE MOMENT, BUT YOU CAN COME INSIDE FIRST

THANK YOU.

HUH? YOU MEAN AT THOSE GOLDEN THREADS?

DON'T STARE AT IT

WHAT ARE THOSE GOLDEN THREADS ON JYUSHI.YOUKO'S LEFT SHOULDER?

Crackle

Crackle

I'M GOING OUT FOR A BIT, BUT YOU TWO HAVE A NICE CHAT

ALL RIGHT, THANK YOU.

IS IT REALLY STRONG? CAN IT PROTECT TANUMA AS WELL?

THAT MONK CAN'T BE AN ORDINARY MAN FOR THAT AYAKASHI TO LIKE IT SO MUCH.

IDIOT THAT'S JUST THE FLARE IT GIVES OFF

SUPERIOR BEINGS LIKE THOSE ONLY FAVOR PEOPLE LIKE THE MONK ALL OTHERS ARE IRRELEVANT TO IT

AS FOR THE SON...

AS LONG AS IT'S NOT JEALOUS, THEN IT'S FINE

OH, YOU'RE HERE

WHAT'S UP, NATSUME?

MY OBA-CHAN" CALLED TO ASK FOR A FAVOR

A FAVOR?

LIKE .T'S NOT UNUSUAL FOR AYAKASHI AND HUMANS TO HAVE D.FFERENT MORAL VALUES

T/N "OBA-CHAN=AUNT

NOTHING I THOUGHT YOU WERE ON THE PHONE?

SOMETIMES I FEEL

SHE MANAGES AN INN. BEFORE I MOVED HERE, SHE USED TO TAKE CARE OF ME

BUT BECAUSE OF SOME RECENT RENOVATIONS, SHE'D LIKE A FEW PEOPLE TO HELP HER OUT FOR TWO OR THREE DAYS.

OH. REALLY?

SHE'LL MAKE YOU WORK HARD, THOUGH

HAHA!

SO NICE~

THAT'S SOUNDS NICE~

YUP

THAT'S GREAT IS THERE AN ONSEN*?

T/N "ONSEN= HOTSPR NG

HM?

YES, WE HAVE ENOUGH PEOPLE NOW!

OH! NISHIMURA AND KITAMOTO ARE HERE TOO!

HEY EVERYONE!

AH, BUT CAN'T WE FIND TWO OR THREE PEOPLE TO WORK WITH US TOO?

HM.

JUST LIKE THAT, WE CONFIRMED OUR PLANS TO HELP OUT AT TANUMA'S OBA-CHAN'S PLACE OVER THE BREAK

It's a serious matter Tanuma. Tell me!

Is the legendary mixed bath there too?

What? Onsen?! I wanna go!!

Ahahaha!

BECAUSE OUR SCHOOL DOESN'T ALLOW STUDENTS TO WORK,

THE ARRANGEMENT WAS FOR US TO BE PAID IN TERMS OF FOOD AND BOARDING

SURE

JUST DON'T GET TOO ROWDY WITH YOUR FRIENDS!

YES. CAN I GO?

OH? YOU'RE GOING TO HELP OUT AT TANUMA'S RELATIVE'S PLACE?

NO WAY YOU'LL JUST CAUSE TROUBLE

I'M GOING TOO!

PETS ARE ALLOWED IN THAT HOUSE AND TANUMA SAID I COULD GO

MAKE SURE YOU HELP OUT PROPERLY

I WILL!

MAKE SURE YOU BEHAVE

STOP DRINKING.

ATSUKAN! ATSUKAN!

YAY!

TO BE HONEST,

UGH. .

IF YOU LEAVE ME BEHIND, YOU'LL REGRET IT

YOU KNOW THAT PLACE IS AN AREA WHERE AYAKASHI TEND TO GATHER.

"YOU NEED IT, NATSUME."

BUT CLOSING MYSELF OFF

AND LOSING THE THINGS I HOLD DEAR SCARES ME TOO

EVEN THOUGH I'M EXCITED

I'M ALSO REALLY TENSE

NO MATTER WHERE I GO, I SEE YAYAKASH

GOOD MORNING!

T/N: NATORI SAYS THIS IN CH 51

No problem!
Thanks Tanuma!
S-sorry about that it's Nyanko-sensei.
Hey Natsume! What's up with your bag? It's so bulky.
IT'S FINE I DON'T GET TO EXPERIENCE THIS TOO OFTEN ANYWAY IT'S PRETTY FUN, ACTUALLY!
WE GOT A BIT CARRIED AWAY I HOPE WE AREN'T TROUBLING YOU TOO MUCH
IS THIS REALLY OK, TANUMA?

THAT'S GREAT TO HEAR. THANK YOU.

Sense, would you like some codfish cheese?*

What souvenirs should I get?

Hey, don't you think the travel time is too long?

Ahhh, what if I fall in love on this trip? What ever will I do?

Are you guys blind?! It's completely different!

Yeah, it looks the same

Eh? Didn't we just get off that one?

Which bus are we transferring to?

Just look at the shape it's the same on the window

Rattle

Rattle

Rattle

Rattle

AH, WELCOME!

I'M GLAD YOU BROUGHT SO MANY FRIENDS.

THANK YOU SO MUCH KANAME-CHAN!

T/N CHEESE TARA (OR CODFISH CHEESE) IS A KIND OF JAPANESE SNACK

HEH.
Kaname-chan.
I'M GLAD
GOOD YOU LOOK A LOT HEALTHIER AND FITTER.
NO, IT'S GREAT!
IT'S BEEN A LONG TIME I HOPE I DIDN'T BRING TOO MANY PEOPLE.
Hahaha!
Sorry, sorry!
LET ME SHOW YOU AROUND THE PLACE
THE SECOND FLOOR IS THE BATH AND THE DINING HALL BREAKFAST WILL BE SERVED THERE
BESIDES THE FOUR OF YOU, THERE WILL BE FIVE MORE GUESTS JOINING US TONIGHT
OOOH, IT'S BEAUTIFUL!
THE FIRST FLOOR IS THE LOBBY
THE THIRD FLOOR HAS THE GUEST ROOMS.

OHHH! IT'S REALLY NICE!

THANK YOU VERY MUCH!

IT'LL BE A BIT CRAMPED, BUT YOU FOUR CAN STAY IN THE ROOM AT THE END

kettle?

AHAHA, YOU'RE SUCH A CHICKEN, NATSUME

WHAT IF AN AYAKASHI OR A KETTLE APPEARS?

NO WAY!

I THINK SO. IF NOT, WE CAN ALWAYS DRAW LOTS, AND SOMEBODY CAN SLEEP IN THE CLOSET

CAN WE FIT FOUR FUTONS IN HERE?

Ah thank you! Can two of you sweep the corridor

and the other two take care of the courtyard?

Yes ma'am!

OK LET'S CHANGE INTO MORE COMFORTABLE CLOTHES AND GET STARTED!

YEAH!

BOO, HOW LAME I'M AT AN ONSEN BUT I CAN'T EVEN DRINK SAKE

THAT'S BECAUSE STUDENTS AREN'T ALLOWED TO ORDER SAKE, SENSEI.

AH. BUT LOOK AT THAT MOUNTAIN. THERE'S GOING TO BE A FESTIVAL HELD UP THERE FOR THE NEXT TWO DAYS.

Sweep

Sweep

FESTIVAL?

THE INN TENDS TO BE CROWDED DURING THIS TIME I USED TO COME BY AND HELP

TANUMA, HAVE YOU STAYED HERE BEFORE?

OH MY!

YEAH, YEAH!

WE CAN TAKE A LOOK TONIGHT IF YOU WANT WHAT DO YOU THINK, SENSEI?

IT'S AN OLD FESTIVAL THE STALLS SHOULD BE SET UP TODAY

Transcendence

Kyaaa

That's great. Are you doing well?

You look much healthier too.

You've really grown taller

Kyaaa

Kyaaa

Y-YES.

Kyaaa

AH, ITO-SAN. IT'S BEEN A WHILE

OH MY, OH MY, OH MY! IF IT ISN'T KANAME-KUN! I HAVEN'T SEEN YOU IN SO LONG!

HE'S A FRIEND FROM YATSUHARA.

HE'S HELPED ME A LOT

CUTE.

Oh my how cute.

Is this your friend?

I'M NATSUME

N-NICE TO MEET YOU!

Anhn!

OH, YES!

OI. NATSUME, TANUMA! ARE YOU DONE?

IT'S NOTHING

THANK YOU.

I SEE THAT'S GREAT

HEY, NISHIMURA.

OH, THANK YOU!

I-ITO-SAN, CALM DOWN

Ahahaha!

OH MY WHAT'S THIS? THEY'RE ALL YOUNG MEN! YOU MUST BE KANAME-KUN'S FRIENDS

OH MY, OH MY COME! HAVE SOME SWEETS!

THE FOUR OF YOU CAN TAKE A BREAK

SOMEHOW THAT REALLY PISSES ME OFF

SMIRKS

YOU SEEM PRETTY POPULAR, TANUMA.

NOPE

SMIRKS

I USED TO LIVE AROUND HERE WITH MY FATHER.

PHEW

DID THAT SHOCK YOU? SORRY NATSUME

BACK THEN, MY FATHER WASN'T HOME VERY OFTEN.

SO EVERY TIME I GOT SICK, THE PEOPLE HERE TOOK CARE OF ME.

BUT THANKS TO YOU, I KNOW WHY I FALL ILL SO EASILY NOW

COME TO THINK OF IT, I DON'T KNOW IF IT'S BECAUSE THERE'S SOMEBODY ELSE WHO CAN DEAL WITH IT NEAR ME, BUT MY HEADACHES HAVE BEEN LESS SEVERE LATELY

REALLY?

BECAUSE OF THAT, SATOMI OBA-CHAN CONSTANTLY WORRIED ABOUT ME.

ITO-SAN, WHO LIVED NEARBY, WOULD ALSO SEND SOME PEARS AND LOZENGES OVER WHENEVER I WAS SICK

I GUESS IT'S LIKE A PIN THAT'S STUCK TO A MAGNET IT GAINS MAGNETIC PROPERTIES

THAT'S A PRETTY GOOD ANALOGY

BUT BECAUSE I'VE HAD SO FEW FRIENDS

IT'S KIND OF EMBARRASSING,

BUT, OBA-CHAN AND ITO-SAN.

I'M GLAD I COULD MAKE THEM HAPPY

I SEE

Transcendence

AFTER WE SERVED FOOD TO THE GUESTS AND LAID OUT THE FUTONS

THAT NIGHT

Ahhh!

Ahhh!

WHACK

WHACK

WHACK

Ahhh!

OUR TRADITION

Footage From Hotels

TRUE GHOST ENCOUNTERS

UNSURPRISINGLY, WE BEGAN OUR NIGHT ACTIVITIES

AH,

MY DAD SNUCK THIS INTO MY BAG. THIS KIND OF BOOK

WHAT?!

WAH! STOP IT!

What if there really is a kettle inside? Rocking back and forth, shaking slowly, removing its lid

Hun? You mean the kettle thing?

Wasn't it all Natsume's fault for saying such strange things? Now I'm scared of the closet

SURROUNDED BY THE HAPPY ATMOSPHERE, I GRADUALLY FELL ASLEEP

WHAT'S GOING ON?

EVEN THOUGH THERE'S A NO SWEEST VAL BEING HELD

Falling

Falling

Falling

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

THERE'S SOMETHING HEADED THIS WAY.

AH.

Patter

Patter

Patter

Patter

Patter

Patter

OPENS

Ohohohoho!

Snore

Snore

!!!

SITS UP

Close

Something entered the closet

Yeah. I heard + + o

Sensei!

Let's take a look.

PEEKS

What

Would you be able to go back to sleep like this.

THE CEILING TILE WAS MOVED.

IS THERE SOMETHING IN THIS HOTEL?

NO, THAT MUST HAVE BEEN A DREAM

MAYBE.

SOMETHING CAME IN.

sense.

OPENS

Wriggle

IT LOOKS LIKE IT CAME FROM THE MOUNTAIN WHERE THE FESTIVAL'S BEING HELD..

I'LL GO CATCH IT!

What?

MAYBE IT WENT TO THE FESTIVAL TO DRINK ALL THE SAKE

I'LL CATCH IT AND BRING ALL THE SAKE BACK!

HEY!

GOOD MORNING!

Sleepy

MORN-ING.

WHAT'S UP, NATSUME?

AHHH, NOTHING I WAS JUST TOO EXCITED TO SLEEP

OH. ME TOO, ME TOO! I BARELY SLEPT AT ALL

AND YET, YOU WERE SLEEPING SO DEEPLY I COULDN'T WAKE YOU UP.

NATSUME, DID SOMETHING HAPPEN?

AHHH.

Food! Food!

CLENCH

YES.

LAST NIGHT, SOMETHING CAME INTO THE HOTEL.

THOUGH I'M NOT SURE WHAT ITS INTENTIONS WERE

THANK YOU.

I UNDERSTAND

SENSEI'S WORKING ON IT

THERE ARE AYAKASHI ALL AROUND, SO YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY TOO MUCH ABOUT IT JUST BE CAREFUL

GOOD MORNING!

BREAKFAST IS BEING SERVED IN THE DINING HALL.

Dining Hall

THANK YOU.

FOOD! FOOD!

THREE PORTIONS. .

WE'RE SHORT ONE

HM?

LET'S EAT. .

HUH?

AM I WRONG ? SOMETH NG S

PLEASE WAIT A BIT I'LL PREPARE ANOTHER SET IMMEDIATELY

THANK YOU SO MUCH.

OH NO, I'M SO SORRY

WHAT HAPPENED? I THOUGHT I LAID OUT THE RIGHT NUMBER.

HUH? WAS IT?

ERM..

WASN'T IT FIVE?

HOW MANY GUESTS WERE THERE LAST NIGHT AGAIN?

WOW, IT LOOKS DELICIOUS. I CAN'T WAIT TO EAT!

DID YOU GET IT WRONG?

BUT THERE ARE SIX PEOPLE NOW

IT'S POSSIBLE

IT'S ALSO POSSIBLE THAT NYANKO-SENSE ATE ONE OF THE PORTIONS.

DID SOMEBODY CHECK IN LAST NIGHT?

SPEAKING OF WHICH NYANKO-SENSEI ISN'T BACK YET

I HOPE NOTHING'S WRONG

COULD WE TAKE A LOOK AT THEM?

I'M AFRAID NOT

WHAT IS IT?

HM? GUEST BOOK?

WE ONLY HAVE GUEST CARDS.

JUST SOME SIMPLE DETAILS WILL DO.

WE THOUGHT IT'D BE BETTER IF WE KNEW THE NUMBER OF GUESTS AND THEIR AGES SO WE COULD ADDRESS THEM APPROPRIATELY

UH

THERE'S THE AGING YUUKI-SAMA WHO'S TRAVELING ALONE,

AND THE MOTHER-DAUGHTER PAIR MINO-SAMA.

THERE'S THE TEENAGER, AKASAKI-SAMA, WHO'S ALSO TRAVELING ALONE,

AND THE YOUNG COUPLE, HATANAKA-SAMA AND OOTAKA-SAMA.

AHHH. YOU CAN LEAVE THE HOSTING TO ME,

BUT I SUPPOSE THERE'S NO HARM IN TELLING YOU

THOSE ARE THE FOUR GROUPS WE HAVE ON THE CARDS

THEY'RE ALL HERE FOR THE FESTIVAL AND WILL PROBABLY STAY UNTIL TOMORROW

DID ANY OF THEM COME IN LATE LAST NIGHT?

I ONLY REMEMBERED FIVE GUESTS WHEN I LAST CHECKED...

WHAT ?

AS I SUSPECTED

HMMM, WHY CAN'T I REMEMBER .? NO.,

NO? WHO. ?

WERE THERE REALLY FIVE PEOPLE LAST NIGHT?

SOMETHING BLENDED IN WITH THE GUESTS LAST NIGHT

I THINK THOSE TRAV-ELING ALONE ARE THE MOST SUSPICIOUS.

ALL IT HAS TO DO IS WRITE A NEW CARD AND IT CAN SLIP IN EASILY

MMMM . BUT JUDGING FROM SATOMI-SAN. IT LOOKS LIKE IT'S SOME SORT OF MEMORY-ALTERING AYAKASH..

SO THOSE IN PAIRS ARE ALSO SUSPICIOUS IT COULD HAVE ADDED ITS NAME TO A CARD AND SLIPPED INTO THE GUEST'S ROOM.

THEN AFTER THAT, MAYBE IT ALTERED THE PERSON'S MEMORY AND PRETENDED THAT THEY'D BEEN TOGETHER SINCE YESTERDAY

THAT'S SCARY!!!

THEN IF IT REALLY DID BLEND IN WITH THE GUESTS,

WHY DIDN'T IT PREPARE FOR PEOPLE OR AYAKASHI THAT HAVE THE ABILITY TO SEE?

Transcendence

MAKING FRIENDS WITH SOMEBODY YOU THOUGHT WAS HUMAN BUT TURNED OUT TO BE AN AYAKASHI..

THAT SOUNDS SAD

.RATHER LONELY

IT WOULD FEEL..

I SEE.

OR SHIFT INTO A HUMAN FORM.

YOU'RE RIGHT.. THERE ARE AYAKASHI THAT CAN MAKE THEMSELVES BE SEEN,

IT'LL BE GREAT IF IT LEAVES BEFORE US,

AND NOTHING HAPPENS IN THE END

AND REQUESTED TO CLEAN UP THE HOTEL BY MYSELF TO SECRETLY DO SOME INVESTIGATING

I LEFT THE JOB OF MOVING THE REMAINS OF THE RENOVATIONS MATERIALS TO TANUMA AND THE OTHERS,

NO MATTER WHAT,

BEFORE WE KNOW THE AYAKASHI'S TRUE INTENTIONS, WE HAVE TO BE CAREFUL.

HEY, YOU.

DO YOU KNOW WHAT TIME THE FESTIVAL'S DANCE STARTS?

AH, YES!

IT SHOULD START AT 5PM ON BOTH DAYS.

I SEE THANK YOU.

YUUKI-SAN

YOU'RE WELCOME

HEY, DON'T RUN AROUND WITHOUT WEARING YOUR SHOES PROPERLY

MINO, THE MOTHER AND DAUGHTER PAIR

Hehehe

Hehehehehe

Yay! Hanahaa

OH NO!

FALLS

OWWW!

AH

..THE YOUNG COUPLE, OOTAKA-SAN AND HATANAKA-SAN

HEHE HOW CUTE ARE YOU OK?

HEY! IS THIS REALLY THE TIME TO BE LAUGHING? DOES IT HURT ANYWHERE?

I CAN'T TELL JUST BY OBSERVING

AKASAKI-SAN IS PROBABLY IN HIS ROOM.

DASHES

IS SHE OK?

WE SHOULD CLEAN THE WOUND I'LL GO GET THE FIRST-AID KIT

AH. THANK YOU SO MUCH

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

RUSTLE

IS THIS THE STORE-ROOM...?

PEEKS

RUSTLE

WHAT WAS THAT SOUND?

NYANKO-SENSEI?

RUSTLE

?!

TURNS

LOOM

OH NO, I'VE BEEN DISCOVERED!

WHAT...

I SAW THE THIEF ENTER THIS HOTEL.

SHHHH. THE FESTIVAL TOKEN HAS BEEN STOLEN.

WAS IT YOU?

NO. EVEN MORE THAT THAT...

BAM

FESTIVAL TOKEN ?

THIEF ?

Thump

THA
THUMP
LIKE A
MY ANXIETY
MOVING

Thump

WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE. ?

WHY .. ARE YOU HERE?

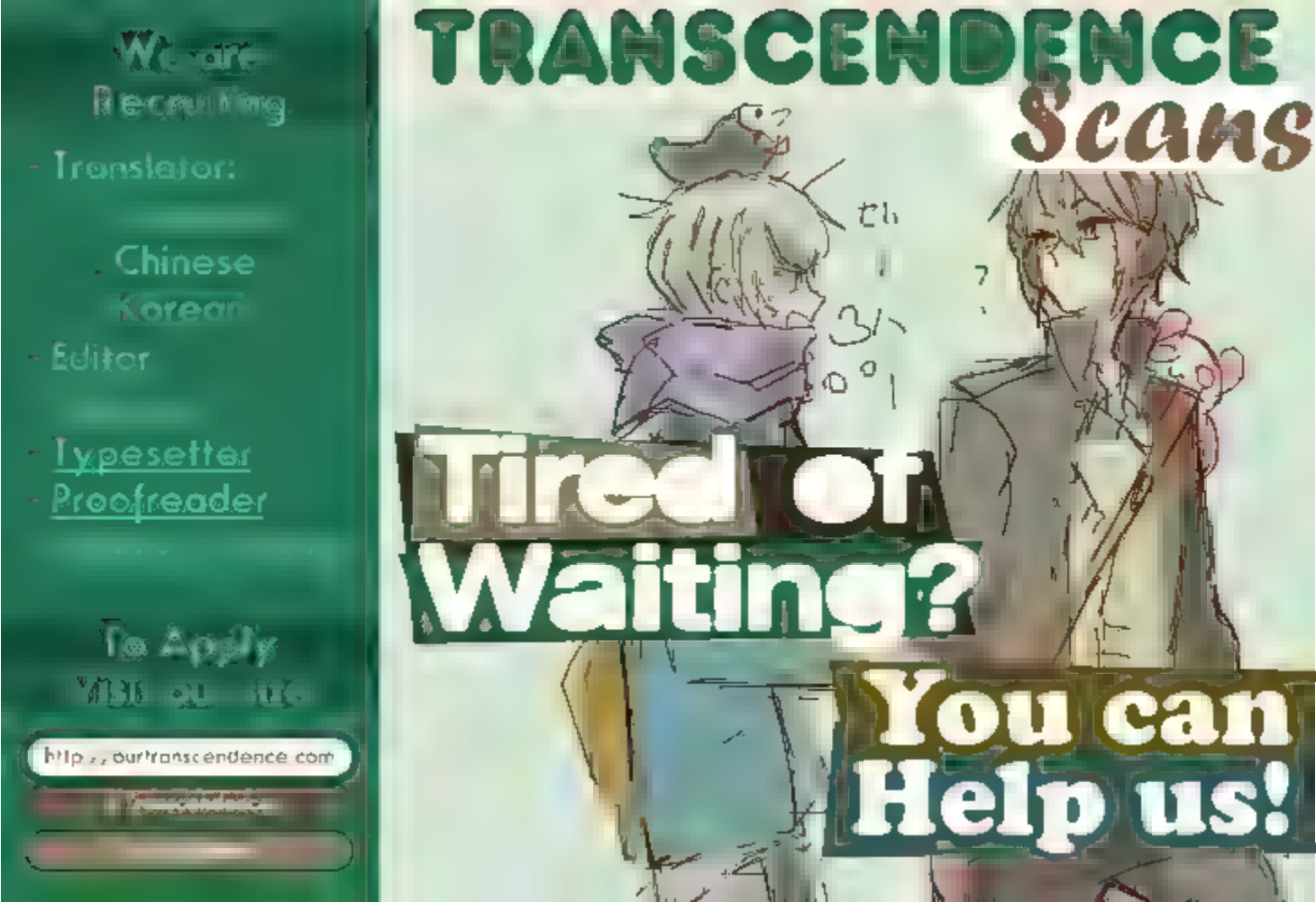
Thump

ITO-SAN.

OHoHo.

IT IS MY DUTY TO PROTECT THE FESTIVAL ON THE MOUNTAIN.

ANYBODY WHO POSES A THREAT WILL BE ELIMINATED.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Chapter 67

夏目友人帳

なつめゆうじんちょう

The way she moved just now—

ITO-SAN... WHAT EXACTLY ARE YOU?

I'LL HAVE TO GET RID OF YOU AND WHOMEVER YOU SPOKE TO

She's an ayakashi...

IF YOU DO,

NOW, NOW. YOU CAN'T TELL ANYBODY ABOUT THIS UNTIL THE END OF THE FESTIVAL

A HUMAN APPEARANCE IS USEFUL, SO I'M PROTECTING THE SHRINE WHILE MAINTAINING A HUMAN FORM.

I'M SERVING THE MIZUNAGI SHRINE HERE

AH, YES

ABOUT BEING SEEN. BOY, PLEASE HELP ME SEARCH FOR A THIEF

EH..?

THE MASK THAT'S USED FOR THE FESTIVAL DANCE WAS STOLEN. IT'S A WHITE MASK OF A WOMAN'S FACE.

WE MUST FIND IT BEFORE THE DANCE THIS EVENING.

Bang Ba-bam

!!!..

AH.

I HAVE TO GO BACK TO THE FEST VAL SOON.. CAN YOU PLEASE HELP ME JUST THIS ONCE?

HM?

THERE'S "SOMETHING" AMIDST THE GUESTS, RIGHT?

YOU..

.....

STARE

AH.. I SEE..

SHOCK

WHAT

She read my thoughts!

LET

IT'S REALLY EASY TO CONNECT WITH YOU.

YOU HAVE STRONG SPIRITUAL POWERS.

SWEATS

RUSTLE

Rustle creak

Rustle Rummage

DON'T JUST TOUCH MY PET AS YOU PLEASE!

HEY! OLD HAG!

BAM

NYANKO-SENSEI!!

Rattle rattle

Shake shake

I'M IN YOUR DEBT I'LL COME BACK BEFORE THE EVENING DANCE. UNTIL THEN, I'M COUNTING ON YOU.

Poof

Swoosh

Whoosh

!

JIFUFU. THIS WHITE MANJUU* IS YOUR FRIEND TOO, RIGHT?

UGH, IM STUCK!

I WANTED TO MAKE A SURPRISE ATTACK!

T/N: STEAMED YEAST BUN WITH FILLING.

TA-TANUMA! SORRY.

Tumble

Tumble

Tumble

BANG

BANG

BOOM

ITO-SAN, WAI-!

WHA-?!

NATSUME... And Sensei

THE GUESTS SAID YOU WENT TO PICK UP THE FIRST-AID BOX BUT NEVER COME BACK.

DID YOU FIND SENSEI?

Phew!

ARE YOU ALL RIGHT?

"Say, if you thought you were talking to a human but in reality it was an ayakashi"

HM?

"You can't tell anybody, if you do—"

TANUMA, ITO.

"That's a somewhat lonely."

..NOTH NG

EH?

ACCORDING TO THE INFORMATION I GATHERED OVERNIGHT,

THE AYAKASHI THAT STOLE THE FESTIVAL MASK SEEMS TO HAVE CONCEALED ITSELF, TANUMA BOY

!

THAT WAS JUST ABOUT HER TRUE IDENTITY, WASNT IT?

WERENT WE ASKED TO HIDE IT?! WE WERE SUPPOSED TO KEEP IT A SECRET!

THE FESTIVAL MASK? FOR WHAT ..?

MAYBE IT'S A YORISHIRO* THAT DRAWS THE POWER OF THE FESTIVAL TO IT,

LIKE A LIGHTNING ROD

T/N: Object to which spirits are drawn and occupied by them

IS THAT REALLY POSSIBLE..?

IF IT WAS LIKE THAT, WOULDN'T IT BE SAFER TO HIDE IN THE NEARBY FOREST OR MOUNTAINS?

TODDLE TODDLE

SO THE THIEF MIGHT NOT HAVE GONE TOO FAR, BUT RATHER HID HIMSELF NEARBY SO THAT THE FESTIVAL POWER COULD BE TRANSFERRED TO HIM.

POSSESSION OF THE MASK MIGHT BE NEEDED TO SNATCH THE GATHERED POWER

IF IT'S ONLY THAT, THEN HE JUST HAS A NASTY PERSONALITY, BUT...

IT'S A PRANK, OF COURSE

WHY WOULD HE SPECIFICALLY CHOOSE TO HIDE AMONGST HUMANS..?

KNOCK KNOCK

EXCUSE ME.

I'M HERE TO CHANGE THE TOWELS.

That such a hideous ayakashi..

WHOO

HE MIGHT ALSO BE IN HIGH SPIRITS BECAUSE, SOON, HE'LL HAVE THE POWER OF THE FESTIVAL IN HIS HANDS.

Then... Shall I fill the pot with hot water?

No

Um. Is there anything else I can do for you?

Oh, what is it, what is it? Someone snatching food?

Stare

The employees are all people I know.

Dining Hall

It's hard to talk to them.

FLIRT

Ahaha!

Uhofu~

Ahaha!

FLIRT

FLIRT

Um...

Um...

Lurks...

ONII-CHAN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?

I'M FREE 'TIL TONIGHT WON'T YOU... PLAY WITH ME...?

sigh

ONII CHAN.

COME TAKE A BREAK WITH US TOO

NATSUME!

BOOORING.

AH, WAIT! I WANT TO.. TALK.

That's the girl who was with Mino-san

SORRY, I HAVE CHORES TO DO R GHT NOW.

YEAH.

KEEP AT IT!

WE'VE MADE GREAT PROGRESS! IF WE CONT NUE LIKE THIS, WE CAN GO TO THE FESTIVAL TONIGHT!

NOTHING SPECIAL.

I TRIED TO TALK TO THE GIRL WHO'S WITH MINO-SAN, BUT SHE RAN AWAY

HOW DID IT GO?

I DIDN'T F ND ANYTHING. THERE WASN'T ANYTHING PARTICULARLY SUSPICIOUS.

WHAT ABOUT YOU?

SNORE

SNORE

EH?

BAM
BA-BAM

AREN'T A LOT OF KIDS SHY IN A PLACE L KE THIS?

WHICH REMINDS ME... WHEN I FIRST CAME HERE, I WAS LIKE THAT TOO.

HEH!

IT'S NOT FUNNY!

ANYWAYS, IT'S BOTH-ERING ME, SO LET'S FOLLOW HER

BA-BAM

I WAS TOTALLY LOOKING FORWARD TO GOING TO THE FESTIVAL TOGETHER WITH MY DAD BUT...

I GOT A FEVER AND I COULDN'T GO IN THE END, SO I WATCHED THE DISTANT BR GHT LIGHTS OF THE FESTIVAL FROM THIS INN TOGETHER WITH HIM

I WAS MISERABLE WHEN I WAS A KID

THE YEAR AFTER, I DESPERATELY WANTED TO GO TO THE FESTIVAL TOO

THERE WERE SO MANY FUN THINGS, LIKE COTTON CANDY AND THE SHOOT NG GALLERY, BUT.

I GOT DIZZY...

AND WHEN I CAME TO AGA,N, I WAS LOST

I WAS SCARED,

AND HELP-LESS

I WAS MORTIFIED, SHOUTING, AND WAS NEARLY IN TEARS..

I THOUGHT I MADE MY DAD WORRY AGAIN.

What happened?

Well now

..SAVED BY ITO-SAN.

I WAS..

THAT'S WHEN I MET ITO-SAN FOR THE FIRST TIME

AH. RIGHT

WHOOSH

The break is over!

EH? A MASK?

HAVE YOU SEEN A WH TE MASK IN THIS INN SOME WHERE?

YES.

This feeling... He doesn t seem to know.

HMM A WH TE MASK LET'S SEE. THEY'RE WEAR NG WHITE MASKS AT THE FESTIVAL TOO, RIGHT? I'M LOOK NG FORWARD TO IT

I HAVE TO GO NOW

EH?

NO. WAIT I TH NK I'VE... SEEN IT SOME- WHERE...

AH,

WHITE

AH, YES. HAVE A SAFE TR P.

NO...? PERHAPS IT WAS MY IMAGINATION...

THE PERSON SEEMED EXCITED, TAKING IT ON AND OFF

SOMEONE HAD A WHITE MASK ON AND WAS GR NNING...

HMM. WHAT IS IT? I CAN'T SEEM TO REMEMBER..

UFUFU.

SHOCK

WAS IT A WOMAN? OR A MAN?

AN ADULT? OR-

CLATTER

Stops

This girl is the mask thief?

PLEASE WAIT!

A mask!

BADUM

This girl has—

Runs

FUFUFU!

IT'S VERY PRECIOUS, SO PLEASE GIVE IT BACK.

WHAT ARE YOU DOING WITH THAT MASK?!

I'M SORRY

....

SOMETHING PRECIOUS?

SHOCK

EH?

BIG SIS WAS PLAYING WITH IT, AND I WANTED TO WEAR IT TOO SO I SECRETLY BORROWED IT FROM HER

AH!

FALLS

KYAH!

GRABS

SURPRISED

AWA I'VE BEEN FOUND OUUUT!

UWIWI!

UGH.

RUNS

RUNS

RUNS

TCH, HE JUST LOST CONSCIOUSNESS. LEAVE HIM BE.

HATANAKA-SAN!

WAIT!

THIS IS MINE

SMASH

PREPARE YOURSELF!

TRANSFORMS

AJEE!

UPSTAIRS.../ IT'S MAKING FOR THE ROOF

UHUHU...

I'LL HANDLE THIS ONE IT DISGUISED ITSELF AS HER

IT SEEMS LIKE THE WOMAN WHO CALLED HERSELF OOTAKA IS ACTUALLY AN AYAKASHI

Crack

Crack

UWIWI!

IF YOU DON'T LET ME GO. I'LL BREAK THIS MASK

Crack

!

Crack

Crack

!

GRIND

YOU DAMNED BEAST

IT'S A PRECIOUS MASK,

FOR AN IMPORTANT FESTIVAL!

JUMPS

STOP IT!

NATSUME!

Crack

Ugh.

The mask...!

EEK. LET GO!

Slip

Crack

Crack

!

GRAB

LET GO OF THE MASK AND LEAVE

I'M SORRY I'M LATE

THANK YOU FOR PROTECT ING IT

Float

ITO-SAN

HIIH !

FLASH

..NOTH-
ING

JUST
NOW..
WHAT..?

WHAT'S
WRONG?

TANUMA?

UGH.

SXING

SWOOSH

NATSUME..?

Somehow..

ba-dump

ba-dump

Keep it a secret...

Ba-dump

Somehow, only this...

Ba-dump

You can't...

...tell anyone about it...

Ba-dump

even if it's something this precious.

Baring your heart only to me,

she's selfishly asking me to keep it a secret.

Ah, again,

Even if she's this gentle...

Bam

Ba-bam

Ba-bam

Bam

Rattle Rattle

Ring

Ba-bam

Ring

That night, Ito-san came to see me in secret

UFUFU, THESE GUYS...

THE GUESTS DON'T SEEM TO REMEMBER THAT AN AYAKASHI HID AMONGST THEM

I WON'T BE ABLE TO DO A FEW THINGS FOR A WHILE BECAUSE THAT DRAINED ALL MY POWER BUT THAT'S OKAY, RIGHT?

THANK YOU. IT'S BECAUSE OF YOU THAT I MADE IT TO THE DANCE IN TIME.

TANUMA HELPED TOO.

OF COURSE, I DIDN'T TELL HIM ABOUT YOUR TRUE FORM.

HMM.

IS THAT SO?

FUFU, I'M SOMEWHAT RELIEVED

WHEN HE WAS LITTLE, HE SEEMED QUITE LONELY

FUFU. HUMANS REALLY DO GROW UP IN THE BLINK OF AN EYE

LFLFL JUST KIDDING

I'M A SHRINE KEEPER. I CAN'T BE FRIENDLY TOWARDS A HUMAN.

I'D LIKE TO MAKE FR ENDS LIKE THIS TOO

IT LOOKS LIKE FUN

AFTER YOU'VE TOLD PEOPLE THAT I'M AN AYAKASHI,

I CAN'T STAY HERE I WILL COME TO PROTECT THE SHR NE AND THE FESTIVAL BUT I'LL HAVE TO THROW THIS FORM AWAY, GET MYSELF A NEW ONE, AND MOVE TO ANOTHER CITY

RIGHT, RIGHT I'M SORRY, BUT PLEASE KEEP MY TRUE IDENTITY A SECRET UNTIL THE FEST VAL IS OVER TOMORROW

UNTIL THE FEST VAL ENDS?

IF I KEEP QUIET, IT'LL JUST BE LIKE NOBODY KNEW ABOUT YOU AT ALL.

REACHES

SEE YOU.

PLEASE WAIT!

floats

YOU WON'T NEED TO MOVE, RIGHT?!

IF I DO THAT,

I WON'T TELL ANYONE.

I DEFINITELY WON'T TALK ABOUT IT.

YOU CAN STAY AS LONG AS YOU WANT TO.

ITO-SAN,

PLEASE STAY.

SO THAT'S WHY...

...I WON'T TELL ANYBODY.

PLEASE STAY

EVEN WITHOUT READING MY HEART,

YOU KNOW I'M NOT LYING.

FUFU.

THAT'S NOT IT

WHEN HUMANS FEEL THIS WAY,

THEY DO THINGS LIKE THIS, RIGHT?

Thank you. Come again, everyone.

The next day, I apologized to everyone for collapsing and worked in order to make up for t

All four of us were able to watch the dance on the last day of the festival

RING RING

Doh

ba-baM

ba-baM

baM

RING RING

IT'S SO BEAUTIFUL

AH..

I'm sorry, Tanuma.

I have a secret I can't tell you about.

THANK YOU, TANUMA.

I HAD LOTS OF FUN!

...

NO I HAD LOTS OF FUN AND SINCE YOU WERE HERE, I COULD ACT WITHOUT WORRYING

I STILL CAN'T DO ANYTHING AT CRUCIAL TIMES.

WAS IT REALLY ALL RIGHT, NATSUME?

Um, when does our train leave?

AND..

HM?

AH, I JUST REMEMBERED

WHEN I WAS LITTLE, I SOMETIMES THOUGHT ITO-SAN WAS SCARY

EH?

HEH.

I DON'T REALLY KNOW HOW TO EXPLAIN IT BUT SHE WAS DEFINITELY DIFFERENT FROM OTHER PEOPLE

AND I WAS AFRAID TO DISCOVER HER TRUE FORM.

WHENEVER I GOT SICK SHE'D SECRETLY VISIT IN THE MIDDLE OF THE NIGHT AND BRING FRUITS.

I NEVER GOT ANY NIGHTMARES WHENEVER SHE PUT HER HAND ON MY FOREHEAD.

I THOUGHT BACK ON IT, AND DECIDED THAT, MAYBE, SHE COULD BE SOMETHING LIKE THAT

BECAUSE SHE MET YOU,

THAT'S WHY...

I'VE NEVER CONSIDERED IT BEFORE BUT...

FOR EXAMPLE, IF SHE WERE AN AYAKASHI

SO. HOW DO I PUT THIS?

BA DUMP

SHOCK

That's why..

He wanted me to confirm it..

THAT'S WHY...

BECAUSE I BECAME FRIENDS WITH PEOPLE LIKE YOU,

TO ME,

THAT PERSON,

THANK YOU, NATSUME.

I WAS ABLE TO SHOW HER MY FRIENDS.

SPECIAL 14 THE DWELLING OF THE FRUITLESS FLOWER

夏目友人帳

なつめゆうじんちょう

Transcendence

WE'D LIKE TO ASK YOU SOMETHING.

RUSTLE

...NAT-SUME?

DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE CALLED 'NATSUME?'

HEY, YOU THERE!

SHOCK

HAA.

THIS AREA IS AS DARK AND CREEPY AS EVER. .

rustle

rustle

OUR PRECIOUS JAR WAS STOLEN BY A HUGE, MESSY-HAIRED WHITE DEMON.

WE WANT TO GET IT BACK, BUT AS YOU CAN SEE, WE ARE QUITE ADORABLE AND SIMPLY NOT POWERFUL ENOUGH. AS SUCH, WE'RE IN SEARCH OF SOMEONE TO HELP US.

I SEE. YOU REALLY ARE ADOR-ABLE.

IT IS SAID THAT, THOUGH NATSUME IS HUMAN, SHE HAS IMMEASURABLE SPIRIT POWER AND LIKES AYAKASH. AS WELL.

HMM, NAT-SUME.

UH, WHEN YOU SAY NATSUME, DO YOU MEAN 'NATSUME REIKO?'

REIKO?

?!

I'VE HEARD RUMORS ABOUT A FRIGHTENING WOMAN WHO HAS TOO MUCH POWER FOR ONE PERSON. HER HAIR IS DISHEVELED AND HER LIPS ARE DEEP RED,

AND IF SHE SEES AN AYAKASHI SHE FORCES IT TO BE HER FOL-LOWER.

FWOOSH

...HUH?

THEY'RE GONE.

HER GRANDSON IS PALE, FRAIL AND SKINNY...

AH, WAIT. BUT IF I'M NOT MISTAKEN,

BUT.

AH.

WE WERE ALMOST TRICKED BY THE RUMORS TO ASK THIS NATSUME TO HELP US.

BUT, I DO WANT TO GET THE JAR BACK FOR THE MASTER'S SAKE.

IF HE'S TRULY LIKE THAT, THEN THERE'S NO WAY HE COULD HELP US.

THAT THIS GRANDSON IS PALE, FRAIL AND SKINNY IS HE REALLY A 'NATSUME'?

rustle

rustle

IT SEEMS WE MUST DO IT OURSELVES.

THESE REALLY ARE DENSE WOODS; IT'S COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FROM OUR WITHERED MOUNTAIN.

HEY, IS THIS REALLY THE WAY?

YES. ACCORDING TO THE INFORMATION I'VE GATHERED, THE WHITE DEMON IS LIVING IN THIS DIRECTION.

HEEEY! IT COULDN'T BE HELPED!

RIGHT, LIKE ABOUT 'NATSUME.'

YOU CAN'T RELY ON NIKAKU'S INFORMATION,

HUMANS ARE GOOD-FOR-NOTHINGS IN THE FIRST PLACE. THEY WOULDN'T HELP US.

SCARY!!!

WHEN I PROPOSED THIS YOU WERE IN HIGH SPIRITS, TOO, WEREN'T YOU?

AND IF SHE SEES AN AYAKASH SHE TEARS OUT EVERY LITTLE BIT OF ITS FUR AND LAUGHS OUT LOUD WHILE WRAPPING IT IN PAPER. AND SO ON. YOU CAN'T REALLY UNDERSTAND WHAT SHE'S THINKING.

IT'S SAID THAT EVEN THOUGH 'NATSUME' IS HUMAN, SHE CAN SEE AYAKASHI.

I'VE HEARD SHE'S GENTLE AND BEAUTIFUL,

giggle

giggle

rustle rustle

HIDE!

!

rustle!

e—ts!

GASP

...OH MY, THESE ARE...!

THIS WAS A RATHER UNEX-PECTED FIND.

giggle

INDEED. LET'S TAKE IT BACK QUICKLY

...HMM? THEN IN THAT BOX...?!

NO DOUBT!

AREN'T THEY THE UNDERLINGS OF THE WHITE DEMON THAT STOLE THE JAR FROM US?!

THE BOSS'LL BE PLEASED WHEN HE SEES WHAT'S INSIDE THIS BOX.

giggle

BY ANY CHANCE, COULD THE JAR BE IN THIS BOX..?!

TH-THIS IS OUR CHANCE! IF THERE ARE ONLY HIS FOLLOWERS GUARDING IT WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO DEFEAT THEM.

Panic

Panic

Panic

DON'T BE STUPID. HOW COULD WE WIN AGAINST ONE WITH FANGS?

Ah!

ka-thunk

UGH, THAT HURTS. I TRIPPED.

Gasp

IDIOT! BE MORE CAREFUL!

CLATTER

CLATTER

Ack!

BLAST

WHA-?

DEAR ME, IS THE CONTENT SAFE...?

SWOOSH

!?

WHOOOSH

TH-THE BOX IS GONE...?!

flap

flap

flap

flap

flap

flap

MISSION ACCOM-PLISHED...!!!

BUT!!!

AH...

THUMP

CLATTER

G-GOOD IDEA.

A-ANYWAY, LET'S PUT IT DOWN ON THAT FIELD AND LOOK INSIDE.

flap flap flap

IT'S ABOUT 47 TIMES HEAVIER THAN EX-PECTED!

IT'S NOT THE JAR! YOUR PREMO-NITION WAS COMPLETELY INCORRECT!!!

!!! ?!

WELL, WAIT. I HATE HUMANS. BUT TO ABANDON HIM HERE IS PITIFUL

WE REALLY HAVE TO GET THE JAR BACK AS SOON AS POSSIBLE, BEFORE IT IS USED FOR SOMETHING HEINOUS.

WAH! WHAT IS THIS?

Panic

Panic

Panic

TO KIDNAP A CHILD OF MAN IN ORDER TO EAT IT, HOW BARBARIC!

I-ISN'T THIS A HUMAN CHILD?! A CORPSE?

LET US AT LEAST GIVE HIM A BURIAL

!?!

UWAHHH?!

AHHH?!

THANK YOU.

YOU SAVED ME. THANK YOU.

rustle

rustle

HE LOOKS WEAK...IT MIGHT BE OKAY TO GO NEAR HIM.

YEAH.

TO GET CAPTURED BY THE LITTLE DEMONS IS RATHER UNFORTUNATE. WHAT HAPPENED?

DOES THAT MEANS HE'S A YOUKAI ...?

H-HE CAN SEE US..?

..HE KNOCKED THOSE LITTLE DEMONS OFF THEIR FEET .? WITH THESE WEAK ARMS.. ?

AHHH... TWO DEMONS ATTACKED ME AND I KNOCKED THEM OFF THEIR FEET.

COME NOW, THIS ISN'T A PLACE TO LOITER AROUND FOR LITTLE ONES.

TO SAY 'KNOCKED OFF THEIR FEET' MUST BE A MISTAKE.

BUT BECAUSE OF THE REBOUND I SLIPPED OFF THE HILL AND BLACKED OUT.

BUT I DON'T LOOK LIKE A HUMAN, I AM— .

DO YOU NOT LIKE HUMANS?

...

THANK YOU.

YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF YOU'RE MISTAKEN FOR A HUMAN, SO YOU SHOULD GO HOME

ESPECIALLY FOR THOSE LIKE YOU, WHO LOOK HUMAN.

..I SEE...

WE OFTEN HEAR RUMORS THAT HUMANS ARE GOOD-FOR-NOTHINGS.

WE HEARD THERE WAS A HUMAN CALLED 'NATSUME' WHO LIKES AYAKASHI, SO WE WANTED TO ASK HIM TO HELP US, BUT... WITHOUT KNOWING HIS TRUE COLORS IT SEEMS SUSPICIOUS.

.....

IF YOU HAD MET THIS 'NATSUME,' WHAT WERE YOU GOING TO ASK HIM TO HELP YOU WITH?

HUH? UM..

WE LIVE TOGETHER WITH OUR MASTER ON THE MOUNTAIN OVER THERE.

BUT LATELY THE NUMBER OF DEAD TREES HAS INCREASED AND THE HUMANS WHO CAME TO TRIM THEM HAVE DECREASED, TOO. IT'S LONELY

SO WE ASKED THE HERMIT TO SPARE US JUST A LITTLE BIT OF THE LEGENDARY ASHES WE HEARD RUMORS ABOUT THAT WOULD MAKE FLOWERS BLOOM BY SCATTERING A BIT OF IT ON THEM.

I DON'T KNOW IF IT WILL REALLY WORK...BUT IF WE SCATTER IT AROUND OUR DWELLING AND THE FLOWERS DO BLOOM, WE WANTED TO INVITE THE LITTLE ONES AND THE BEASTS FOR HANAMI.

AND MAYBE EVEN OUR MASTER WILL ENJOY IT AND LAUGH.

BUT ON OUR WAY HOME, WE WERE CARELESS AND THE SHAGGY WHITE DEMON TOOK THE JAR WITH THE ASHES FROM US...

WE WANT TO GET IT BACK.

T/N 'HANAMI' MEANS FLOWER VIEWING

I SEE..

WHERE IS THIS WHITE DEMON?

WE DON'T KNOW WE DISCOVERED HIS UNDER-LING DEMONS CARRYING YOU WHILE WE WERE SEARCHING FOR IT

THOSE TWO...

... ..

GOOD. THEN WE BETTER GO BACK TO THOSE UNDER-LINGS.

HUH?

IF WE TAIL THEM, WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO FOLLOW THEM TO THE WHITE DEMON'S DWELLING, RIGHT?

Yes!

Rustle

OH, THERE THEY ARE!

IF WE DO THIS, IT COULD WORK. YOU'VE HELPED US GREATLY, PSEUDO-HUMAN.

OH NO, YOU HELPED ME TOO...

HOW IS IT? DID YOU FIND THE BOX?

NO... THERE'S NOTHING WE CAN DO. LET'S GO BACK.

BUT IT REALLY IS REGRET-TABLE.

THAT FACE WAS DEFINITELY NATSUME REIKO.

RIGHT IF WE BROUGHT HER BACK HOME, THE BOSS WOULD SURELY BE.

SWOOSH

fu

fu

fu

fu

fu

..DID THOSE AYAKASHI KNOW REIKO-SAN. ?

HM?

chatter chatter chatter

GOOD NOW WE MIGHT BE ABLE TO RETRIEVE THE JAR.

I ALSO HAVE SOME BUSINESS WITH THEM.

SWOOSH

NOTHING. YOU SAVED ME, SO I'LL ACCOMPANY YOU A LITTLE LONGER.

EH?

sneak

sneak

sneak

THEY LIVE PRETTY DEEP INSIDE.

EVEN THE ROCKS ARE SCATTERED AND BROKEN.

IT'S GETTING DARKER AND DARKER. IT REALLY FEELS LIKE A DEMON'S DWELLING.

WAIT, NYANKO-SENSEI?!

EEK, WHAT'S THIS?

GOOD GRIEF.

AH, I SEE...

IT'S GROWN SO THICKLY ABOVE,

THE LIGHT CAN'T REACH THE GROUND

GRAB

THEN YOU SHOULD HAVE COME AND SAVED ME MORE QUICKLY, BODYGUARD.

THESE BIRDS SAVED ME.

I WAS ON PATROL TO CHECK FOR THE NEWEST PRODUCTS OF NANATSUJIYA LIKE ALWAYS,

WHEN I SAW YOU BEING PACKED IN A BOX AND TAKEN AWAY, I FOLLOWED YOU.

IT'S BECAUSE THESE DEMON UNDERLINGS SEEM TO KNOW REIKO-SAN.

IF THERE'S SOMEONE I NEED TO GIVE A NAME BACK TO, THEN HE MIGHT KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT REIKO-SAN, RIGHT?

HMPH.

ARE YOU GOING TO STAY HERE FOREVER? LET'S HEAD BACK NOW.

HEY.

IS THIS MOCHI-LIKE MONSTER AN ACQUAINTANCE OF YOURS?

AH?!

T/N _MOCHI' IS JAPANESE STICKY ROUND RICE CAKE

HOW TROUBLE-SOME IT'S FINE IF I JUST CATCH THOSE TWO AND HAVE THEM SPIT OUT WHAT THEY KNOW, RIGHT?

SENSEI!

RIGHT, NATSUME?

NA, NAT-SUME...?!

BY ANY CHANCE, ARE YOU THE RU-MORED...?!

AH...

WE'LL BE WRAPPED- UWAAH!

. . . . . .

Rustle

WHOOSH

HEY, LET'S GO, NATSUME.

WAIT, SENSEI!

...

. I'M SORRY I STARTLED YOU.

IF I FIND OUT SOMETHING ABOUT THE JAR, I'LL LET YOU KNOW

BYE.

Gasp

HEY, LITTLE DEMONS.

THAT'S RIGHT. SO THIS JAR COMES FIRST...

EVEN IF WE HAD BROUGHT HER WITH US, THERE WERE STILL NO PREPARATIONS MADE.

WELL, IT'S OK.

HAH... IT REALLY IS REGRET-TABLE.

THE BOSS WOULD HAVE SURELY BEEN HAPPY...

TELL US WHAT YOU KNOW!

WHERE'S YOUR BOSS?

DO YOU GUYS KNOW REIKO?

EEK!

HA! NATSUME REIKO!

Jheeze

Jheeze

HEY, NYANKO-SENSE!!

DON'T JUST SCARE THEM AS YOU PLEASE.

GRAND-SON?

YOU'RE LYING!

IT WAS FROM A DISTANCE, BUT WE HAVE SEEN REIKO'S FACE! THIS FACE IS REIKO'S!

RIGHT, RIGHT.

SO YOU REALLY DID KNOW REIKO-SAN?

I'M NOT REIKO-SAN, I'M HER GRANDSON.

WHERE HAVE YOU SEEN HER?

DID YOU FIGHT HER BY ANY CHANCE?

IF IT HAD BEEN LIKE THAT THEN WE WOULD'VE BEEN LUCKY, BUT...

EH?

EVENTUALLY, THE RUMOR EVEN REACHED THIS DEEP INTO THE MOUNTAIN.

THEY SAID THERE WAS A WOMAN WHO, THOUGH HUMAN, COULD SEE AYAKASHI AND CHALLENGED THEM TO A FIGHT.

CARELESSLY, I TOLD THIS TO OUR BOSS.

"IF I WERE TO MEET HER, I WOULD BEAT HER AT HER OWN GAME."

"TO CHALLENGE AYAKASHI EVEN THOUGH SHE'S JUST A HUMAN THAT'S RATHER IMPERTINENT."

WHAT KIND OF PERSON IS THIS REAC?"

IT WAS STUPID AND THE BOSS SHOULDN'T HAVE MINDED IT,

BUT EVENTUALLY..

"THIS RE KO"

"ALL THE WAY TO THIS DARK MOUNTAIN"

"EVENTUALLY SHE WILL COME HERE, RIGHT?"

"WON'T SHE?"

POOF

GOOD GRIEF, WHAT A SIMPLE ONE...

THEN THAT DAY CAME.

OF COURSE A CHILD OF MAN FROM A FARAWAY VILLAGE WOULDN'T COME HERE

BUT THE BOSS SEEMED TO ENJOY THE STORY ABOUT NATSUME REIKO AND WAS CURIOUS ABOUT SOME THINGS...

"BOSS, THIS IS "

JUST ONCE, THE BOSS WENT NEAR THE VILLAGE TO SEE REIKO

"IS THAT HER? I WANT TO FIGHT WITH THIS HUMAN CHILD."

OOOH

WATCHING HER...

WAS QUITE ENJOYABLE.

SHE DODGED A HUGE AYAKASHI LIKE IT WAS JUST FALLING LEAVES.

BUT RECENTLY THERE HAVE BEEN NEW RUMORS ABOUT 'NATSUME' OR 'REIKO' APPEARING .

AND THE BOSS STOPPED TALKING ABOUT REIKO, TOO.

BUT AT SOME POINT THE RUMORS ABOUT REIKO SUDDENLY STOPPED...

AND YOU THOUGHT TO DELIVER REIKO TO YOUR BOSS.

sneak

HE... IS NOT REIKO...?

SO THEN THIS REALLY IS HER GRANDSON NATSUME...?

I SAID I'M NOT REIKO!!!

INCHING FORWARD...

THAT'S HOW IT IS! SO COME ALONG OBEDIENTLY AND FIGHT WITH OUR BOSS, REIKO!!!

WHERE IS IT?

YOUR BOSS STOLE IT FROM THE BIRDS RECENTLY, RIGHT?

SAY, WHERE'S THE JAR?

YEAH, AND HER FACE WAS SHARPER THAN HIS...

...REIKO REALLY SHOULD HAVE HAD LONGER HAIR...

.....

JAR? AH, THAT'S THE THING THAT THE BOSS HAS, BUT.

SHH! DON'T SAY UN-NECESSARY THINGS.

WE AREN'T BIRDS!

H-HOW RUDE!

AH, WAIT, REIKO-SAN IS..

WHOOSH

WE'LL CONTINUE TO SEARCH FOR REIKO.

WHOOSH

ANYWAY, IF YOU'RE NOT REIKO, WE HAVE NO BUSI-NESS WITH YOU!

sigh

WHAT A RESTLESS BUNCH.

WHAT'S WITH THIS JAR?

AH, IT SEEMS IT CONTAINS THE LEGENDARY ASHES THAT MAKE FLOWERS BLOOM.

SOUNDS FISHY. WHAT DOES HE INTEND TO DO, STEALING SOMETHING LIKE THAT?

I DON'T KNOW.

BUT I HAVE A FEELING ..

HM?

NOTHING. WELL, LET'S GO WHEN I ASKED ABOUT THE JAR JUST NOW, THEY LOOKED THIS WAY

IT SEEMS THEIR DWELLING IS NEARBY.

A CAVE.
HMPH. I CAN SMELL AYAKASHI.
EEK, WE'RE EXPOSED!!!
WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO? DO YOU WANT TO GO TOGETHER?
Ahh... well, we're grate-ful...
GOOD, LET'S GO.

Silence

I WANT TO TALK TO YOU.

IS ANYONE HERE? HELLO?

LET'S LEAVE IMMEDIATELY AFTER WE FIND WHAT WE'RE LOOKING FOR, THOUGH IT SEEMS LIKE A BOTHERSOME AYAKASHI.

WELL, WE MIGHT AS WELL LOOK AROUND.

toddle. toddle

toddle

NOBODY HOME?

MAYBE IT'S THE WRONG PLACE

RATTLE

Transcendence

WHO IS IT

THAT DARES ENTERS MY DWELLING?

HIDE

WE CAME BECAUSE WE WANTED TO TALK TO YOU.

CAN YOU PLEASE GIVE BACK THE JAR?

THE OWNERS OF IT ARE TROUBLED

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO USE THE JAR FOR?

THERE IS A GUEST WHOM I ALWAYS WANTED TO COME HERE.

I WANT TO MAKE THE FLOWERS BLOOM, OF COURSE.

BUT THERE IS NO WAY THAT SHE WOULD COME TO THESE DESOLATE LANDS.

AND IT OVERFLOWS WITH BEAUTIFUL FLOWERS,

BUT IF I LET MANY FLOWERS BLOOM,

AND SHE KEEPS HEARING THE RUMORS, MY GUEST WILL...

NATSUME REIKO MIGHT COME AND VISIT US

PULL

!

WHY DO YOU HIDE YOUR FACE..? COULD IT BE THAT YOU ARE NATSUME REIKO...?

. SHOW ME YOUR FACE PROPERLY...

HUH? YOU...

AT LAST OUR GUEST HAS COME TO OUR DWELLING.

OH, NO DOUBT, REIKO!!!

NO...I'M REIKO'S GRANDSON.

REIKO IS..

I'VE WANTED TO TALK TO YOU FOR SO LONG.

OOH, REIKO, REIKO!

WAIT REIKO, I'LL MAKE FLOWERS BLOOM FOR YOU RIGHT NOW.

IS A HUMAN VILLAGE A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE IN?

WHAT KIND OF CREATURES ARE HUMANS?

SLIDING

...UGH...

NO...

REIKO-SAN IS ALREADY...

SHOCK

HEY, 'REIKO!'

THE WAY HE IS NOW, IT WON'T MATTER TO HIM WHAT YOU SAY.

...IT'S UNPLEASANT, BUT...LET'S PLAY ALONG WITH HIM FOR A LITTLE,

REIKO.

ALSO, CAN YOU LISTEN TO A REQUEST OF THIS REIKO?

A RE-QUEST FROM REIKO...?

CLENCH

I WON'T RUN AWAY. WILL YOU WELCOME ME?

YOU'RE USING TOO MUCH FORCE IT HURTS. COULD YOU PLEASE LET ME GO?

WHAT IS IT? REIKO...

BUT PLEASE GIVE THE JAR BACK.

I KNOW YOU WANTED TO MAKE ME FEEL WELCOME AND THAT MAKES ME VERY HAPPY,

I FEEL SAD ABOUT THE THING YOU STOLE.

I'M HAPPY.

EVEN WITHOUT FLOWERS,

IT'S FINE EVEN WITHOUT THE FLOWERS.

THE DEMON BOSS EVEN APOLOGIZED DEEPLY

UWAAAH, YOU SAVED US.

THE WAY YOU RECOVERED THE JAR WAS MIRACULOUS.

...RIGHT, ISN'T THAT GREAT...

DEAD TIRED

IN CONTRAST TO ITS APPEARANCE, IT WAS AN AYAKASHI THAT LOVED TO TALK

YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT.

...BUT...

I WASN'T REALLY WORRIED ABOUT YOU PRETENDING TO BE REIKO,

BECAUSE HE WAS SATISFIED WITH IT

NATSUME-SAMA, PLEASE CHEER UP!

WE HAVE TO DO SOME-THING TO THANK YOU.

RIGHT, WE MUST THANK YOU!

MAYBE.

IF YOU SAY SO THAT'S GOOD, BUT...

HAHA, NO, IT'S OK...

NATSUME-SAMA, WHAT DO YOU WANT AS A THANK YOU...?

HEY, SHUT UP!

AS IF I'D CARE ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

ROAR

AH!

WHOOSH

...WELL, LET'S GO BACK TO OUR MOUNTAIN, TOO.

AH...

THEY'RE GONE...

I WONDER IF THE MASTER WILL BE HAPPY...

IF IT'S THE MASTER, FOR SURE...

WHETHER OR NOT

THE FLOWERS BLOOM,

...BUT I'M SURE IT WILL BE OK.

RIGHT.

WE COULD SEARCH FOR THE HOUSE 'NATSUME' LIVES IN AND SECRETLY SCATTER IT THERE.

IF THERE IS SOME ASH LEFT OVER, WE COULD SHARE A BIT WITH THE WHITE DEMON, TOO.

YEAH, WE COULD.

YEAH, AND THEN...

VISIT US AT HTTP://WWW.OURTRANSCENDENCE.COM AND JOIN US TODAY!

GHAAAK!

Tear

FOUND ONE.

Unsuspecting Lurker.

Shineshan

Xye

New Recruit.

On it, Boss!

Yes! Shine, go get the cookies!

YOU SAID THAT YOU WERE GOING TO AVOID ANY VIOLENCE!

HEY!

Did she just say there were cookies?

He's sturdier than the others.

MAKE SURE HE CAN STILL USE HIS HANDS, OK?

OK.

I found more help.

UM, TEAR?

Xye.

Is she my trainer?

What... What was that, just now?

WE STILL NEED MORE *TRANSLATORS*, *CLEANERS*, AND *TYPESETTERS*.

Come join us...

Please...

MORE...